

Path to College Event Planning Handbook

Elementary School Edition



Presented by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission,
College Access and Success Division

Welcome to Path to College Events!

Dear Path to College Event Coordinators,

On behalf of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), thank you for hosting Tennessee Path to College Events at your school. You play a critical role in helping your students build their college and career aspirations, and providing them with the knowledge and tools to turn their dreams into reality.

We know that in middle school, there are unique opportunities for students to interact with age appropriate content about college, career, and financial aid. This year, we are excited to share with you new, updated resources for our entire suite of Path to College events: College Application and Exploration Week, TN FAFSA Frenzy, College and Career Planning, and College Signing Day.

This guide should be a starting point for inspiration and activities that you can bring to life throughout the year. In addition to implementation, we also encourage you to involve your local community through volunteer engagement and outreach to the media as a way to foster a college-going culture both within and outside of your school.

Please contact Suzette Telli at 615.741.3055 or suzette.telli@tn.gov, or Kevin Edwards at 615.741.1318 or kevin.edwards@tn.gov if you have any questions or concerns about planning and implementing these events at your school. We will keep you updated regarding any changes or additional information you may find useful.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to participate in these important events. Your participation will encourage Tennessee students and their families to make college a part of their future.

Sincerely,



Troy Grant
Senior Director
College Access and Success Division
Tennessee Higher Education Commission
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A Special Note to School Counselors

Dear Path to College Event Coordinators,

On behalf of the Tennessee Department of Education, thank you for your dedication to fostering a college-going culture in your school and for your participation in the Tennessee Higher Education Commission's Path to College Events. Path to College events are an exceptional resource for students and families and align with our vision and intention that we will set all students on a path to success after high school graduation.

The Department of Education's Best for All strategic plan has three pillars: Academics, Educators, and Whole Child. If we are successful, then Tennessee will increase the number of students who, two years after high-school graduation, are meeting key attainment milestones that we know help build successful in life, including:

- Persistence in a postsecondary education;
- Earning a postsecondary degree or certificate;
- Working in a job that provides a high quality of life for themselves and their families, and/or;
- Enrolling in the military.

The leadership and mentoring that school counselors provide to students, families and their colleagues is indispensable for supporting academic success and student well-being. As we confront extraordinary challenges this school year, ensuring students can continue developing and pursuing postsecondary pathways is more important than ever. Thank you for supporting the Path to College events and for all you do to positively impact the lives of students.

With gratitude for your work and commitment to students,

Dr. Jean Luna
Chief of Programs
Divisions of Whole Child & College, Career and Technical Education
Jean.Luna@tn.gov



Tennessee Counselor Standards and Path to College

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
SCHOOL COUNSELING MODEL & STANDARDS POLICY	5.103

Academic Standards

Standards guiding school counseling programs to implement strategies and activities to support and maximize each student's ability to learn.

Academic Standards	CAW	FAPSA Priority	CPE	CSO
Attitudes:				
AA1. Improve academic self-concept				✓
AA2. Display positive attitude toward work and learning				
AA3. Develop high expectations for achievement	✓	✓	✓	✓
AA4. Apply self-motivation and self-direction to learning	✓	✓	✓	
AA5. Model a sense of belonging in the school environment				✓
AA6. Build aspirations for postsecondary education and training	✓	✓	✓	✓
Knowledge:				
AK1. Specify high school graduation requirements, including pathway of study				
AK2. Describe the benefits of education for career, life management, and personal and professional satisfaction	✓		✓	
AK3. Articulate belief that postsecondary education and life-long learning are necessary for long-term career success	✓		✓	
Skills:				
AS1. Use test-taking, time management, organizational, and study skills to improve academic achievement				
AS2. Work independently	✓	✓		
AS3. Develop and practice effective technology skills	✓	✓		
AS4. Utilize resources to overcome barriers to learning	✓	✓	✓	
AS5. Exhibit creativity				
AS6. Set, evaluate progress toward, and achieve long and short term goals	✓	✓	✓	✓
AS7. Demonstrate critical thinking and decision making skills to make informed decisions	✓	✓	✓	
Experiences:				
AE1. Experience academic growth and success				✓
AE2. Engage and persevere in challenging coursework				
AE3. Create a secondary educational plan that includes transition to postsecondary education and the workforce	✓		✓	
AE4. Participate in enrichment or extracurricular activities				

For an explanation of how hosting a Path to College event helps meet the indicated standards, please see notes in the last page of this document

Tennessee Counselor Standards and Path to College

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION			
SCHOOL COUNSELING MODEL & STANDARDS POLICY			5.103

Social and Emotional Development Standards

Standards guiding school counseling programs to help students manage emotions and learn and apply interpersonal skills.

Social and Emotional Standards	CSW	FAUSA Policy	CSW	CSO
Attitudes:				
SA1. Develop positive attitudes toward self as a unique and worthy person				✓
SA2. Develop positive attitudes toward others as unique and worthy people				✓
SA3. Respect diversity in culture, perspectives, values, and experiences				
SA4. Recognize each person is a part of a diverse local and global community				
Knowledge:				
SK1. Develop and articulate personal values, attitudes, and beliefs				
SK2. Compare and contrast healthy and unhealthy behaviors				
SK3. Distinguish appropriate behaviors for a variety of settings and situations				
Skills:				
SS1. Make ethical decisions and practice social responsibility				
SS2. Advocate for self in multiple settings using assertiveness skills	✓	✓		
SS3. Demonstrate empathy toward others				
SS4. Effectively collaborate with others, cooperate with diverse perspectives, and communicate effectively in a variety of situations	✓	✓		
SS5. Exercise personal safety skills, including refusal skills				
SS6. Assume responsibility for choices and consequences				
SS7. Positively manage behavior and choices by applying self-discipline and self-control				
SS8. Persevere through challenges to achieve goals	✓	✓		✓
SS9. Select and utilize appropriate coping skills in the face of a specific challenge	✓	✓		
SS10. Appropriately utilize social media to enhance learning, develop positive relationships, communicate, and engage in age appropriate entertainment	✓			✓
Experiences:				
SE1. Participate in service projects, service learning, and/or philanthropic activities				
SE2. Work effectively in diverse groups by developing and employing leadership and teamwork skills				
SE3. Explore cultural, ethnic, philosophical, or demographical differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment				
SE4. Create and sustain positive, supportive, and appropriate relationships with peers and adults that support success	✓	✓	✓	✓

For an explanation of how hosting a Path to College event helps meet the indicated standards, please see notes in the last page of this document.

Adapted: 10/26/2005

Revised: 10/14/2016

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1-27-17 11 ID School Counseling Policy 5.103 Attachment Clean Copy

Tennessee Counselor Standards and Path to College

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION		
SCHOOL COUNSELING MODEL & STANDARDS POLICY		5.103

College and Career Readiness Standards

Standards guiding school counseling programs to help students understand the connection between school and work as well as plan for and make a successful transition to postsecondary education, training, or the workforce.

College and Career Readiness Standards	CCW	FAFSA Ready	CCW	CSO
Attitudes:				
CA1. Develop and articulate postsecondary education and career aspirations	✓	✓	✓	✓
CA2. Articulate that career development occurs across the lifespan				
CA3. Reflect on progress toward goals, display a growth mindset, and accept feedback to improve knowledge, skills, and abilities in order to meet goals				✓
Knowledge:				
CK1. Research and appraise characteristics of a variety of traditional and nontraditional occupations	✓		✓	
CK2. Articulate how personal abilities, skills, interests, and motivations influence values, choices, and plans				
CK3. Articulate the importance of responsibility, dependability, punctuality, integrity, and effort in the workplace				
CK4. Research and summarize the education and training needed to achieve specified career goals	✓		✓	
CK5. Examine and utilize resources for college affordability planning		✓	✓	
CK6. Research, select, and participate in postsecondary admissions and scholarship applications processes	✓	✓	✓	
Skills:				
CS1. Develop skills to locate, evaluate and interpret career information	✓		✓	
CS2. Balance school, home, and community activities effectively				
CS3. Utilize internal and external resources to manage transitions and adapt to changing situations/responsibilities				
CS4. Communicate effectively using oral, written, and listening communications skills	✓	✓	✓	
CS5. Set clear, ambitious, and obtainable postsecondary goals	✓	✓	✓	✓
Experiences:				
CE1. Participate in career and postsecondary institution exploration activities	✓			
CE2. Assess and modify educational plan to support changes in educational and career goals				
CE3. Pursue and develop competency in areas of career interest				
CE4. Participate in college and career assessments	✓			
CE5. Complete the FAFSA		✓		
CE6. Submit at least one postsecondary education, training, or workplace application; participate in TNPromise program, if applicable	✓			

For an explanation of how hosting a Path to College event helps meet the indicated standards, please see notes in the last page of this document.

Tennessee Counselor Standards and Path to College

Standard	Notes
AA1	College Signing Day provides the school community with an opportunity to celebrate students' academic achievement and postsecondary plans.
AA3 & AA6	Research from Oreopoulos and Ford (2016) suggests that assisting students with applications and the financial aid process could help build postsecondary interest and awareness. Oreopoulos, P., & Ford, R. (2016). <i>Keeping college options open: A field experiment to help all high school seniors throughout the college application process</i> . Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
AA4	By attending Path to College Events, students demonstrate initiative and self-motivation.
AA5	Celebrating students and their various postsecondary plans can help develop a culture of success and college-going.
AI2 & AI3	During College Application Week and College Planning Night, students can participate in activities that help them consider their personal and career goals and explore educational paths to achieving those goals.
AS2	Completing the FAFSA and college applications will require working independently in addition to receiving support from staff and volunteers.
AS3	Most students complete the FAFSA and college applications electronically. Doing so requires that students demonstrate basic technology skills.
AS4	Notoriously challenging to complete, the FAFSA can be a barrier to accessing postsecondary education. Likewise, completing college applications and supplying the necessary supplemental documents can pose a challenge. By participating in events and planning for college, students will be connected with resources to successfully overcome these barriers.
AS6	All events mark students' completion of milestones on the path to achieving postsecondary goals.
AS7	Planning for college and completing the FAFSA and college applications will require critical thinking skills.
AE1	College Signing Day is a celebration of academic success.
AE3	During College Application Week and College Planning Night, students can plan for completing secondary school and their postsecondary goals.
SA1 & SA2	College Signing Day allows students to celebrate the success and their success of their peers.
SS2	Choosing to participate in the FAFSA Frenzy and/or College Application Week demonstrates students' ability to advocate for themselves and seek out resources when they need assistance.
SS4	Filing the FAFSA and completing college applications will require students to collaborate with their parents or guardians. Students will also need to effectively communicate relevant information to staff and volunteers to receive assistance applying and filing.
SS8 & SS9	Many students fear that the college application process is going to be challenging and complicated. By attending a Path to College event students take steps towards overcoming that challenge and can practice coping skills in the face of frustrations. College Signing Day is a celebration of their success and perseverance.
SS10	College Application Week and College Signing Day both have social media campaigns and hashtags that students can participate in to practice using social media positively.
SE4	At Path to College events, students will be able to seek support and develop relationships with volunteers and staff and will also be able to collaborate with other students and their family.
CA1	Participating in Path to College Events helps students plan for and see postsecondary education as a realistic option.
CA3	College Signing Day gives students an opportunity to reflect on their postsecondary goals and celebrate their success.
CK1 & CK4	Activities during College Application Week and College Planning Night can be designed to allow students across all grade levels to do research on career options and required education.
CK5	The FAFSA is a resource for college affordability planning. During College Planning Night, students and parents should work on planning to pay for postsecondary education.
CK6	The main purpose of these events is to help students research and apply for postsecondary education.
CS1	During College Application Week and College Planning Night, students and families have the opportunity to research career options.
CS4	During Path to College Events, students will be required to communicate effectively with parents/guardians and volunteers/staff.
CS5	Participating in Path to College Events demonstrates that students have set goals for postsecondary education and are taking necessary steps towards achieving those goals.
CE1&CE4	During College Application Week, students of all grade-levels can participate in activities to explore career and postsecondary options, including college and career assessments.
CE5	By the end of the TN FAFSA Frenzy event, students should have filed a FAFSA or be very close to completion.
CE6	By the end of College Application Week, seniors should have submitted at least one postsecondary application.

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How to Use this Guide

This guide is broken into five sections: An Introduction to College Access, Implementing Path to College Events, Volunteer Engagement and Path to College, Media Outreach and Social Media and Path to College and Virtual Learning.

Throughout these sections, particularly in the “Implementing Path to College Events” section, you will see two recurring icons:



This icon indicates an **Implementation Idea**. These are broad ideas that you can adapt and use at your school.



This icon indicates that a download is available. These can be worksheets or diagrams that you can use to make an Implementation Idea come to life. For example, this icon will appear next to any handouts or activities.

With this Guide, educators can supplement their lessons, units, and assemblies to enhance their school’s college-going culture. Hopefully you received our mailed resources, complete with posters and stickers. Path to College annually updates resources and materials in order to support schools’ college-going cultures. We hope that you can use these materials to supplement what you are already doing in your schools to support all students throughout their Path to College.

Path to College Materials

Sponsored by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and funded with United States Department of Education GEAR UP TN funding, we are excited to share posters and stickers with every school that registers for Path to College. Registration is open from April-August each year so that we can make certain every interested school is receiving the materials they need to host Path to College events.

If your school registered to receive Path to College materials, you should have received a box of materials that are designed to be shared with students in hallways and on bulletin boards, as well as given to students to use themselves. For example, handing out a sticker with “I’m College Bound” can mean a great deal to a student who might never have thought of her or himself as capable. Likewise, posters about college earnings should be placed near or around the School Counseling offices, so that students can access the information on their own.

We encourage you and your school to find ways to incorporate these posters in the daily work of inspiring and engaging your students. We know that your schools are always trying to innovate and enhance the student experience and we hope that a few free posters and stickers might help in some small way.

Suggestions for Using Path to College Materials



Learning self-regulation and responsibility are key to becoming a college and career ready citizen. Help your students create a list of their own college skills that they might need to develop before they enter high school.



During #TNCollegeAPPWeek, inspire each of your students with a sticker to show them that you believe that they will succeed and are truly College Material.



Every student should begin to see the connection between college and a great future career. Elementary schools do such a fantastic job of creating career fairs, but make sure that your next career day highlights the path through college. Remember, college is *any formal* training beyond high school graduation. TCAT, Community College, and University are all great ways to catapult students to a great job.

Each Elementary School will receive a packet of 16 career clusters posters. Consider these a bulletin board in a box. Students can see that the 16 Career Clusters each contain several different careers within each one. Show the students that all these careers require a college credential. Creative ideas could also include asking teachers to include these posters when they discuss certain content or lessons. Describe what Career Clusters are and how they might impact your future.



Every student has a future. It is our responsibility to help our students find the pathways. During #TNCollegeAPPWeek or during your school's Career Week, make sure to distribute these stickers to each and every student. Allow the students to be creative and remember, students' need to develop a sense of self with adult guidance. Send a picture of your student and their Future sticker to parents/guardians.

S E C T I O N 1

An Introduction to College Access

Included in this section:

- » College-Going Culture Overview
- » Definitions of College-Going Culture
- » What the Research Says About College Access Activities
- » College-Going Culture Assessment

College-Going Culture Overview

Path to College Events are designed to help build a college-going culture in your school and community. It is our hope that the resources and implementation ideas provided in this handbook will assist you in planning and hosting your events. However, creating a college-going culture requires more than just the efforts of the school counselor. It requires the commitment and involvement of the entire school community.

This section will provide you with an overview and a definition of a college-going culture. Additionally, it includes a snapshot of the college access landscape in Tennessee and an overview of current research that supports the importance of building a college-going culture in your school community. We suggest sharing this research with your principal and/or taking time to present this research during your next school-wide staff meeting. A “College-Going Culture PowerPoint” is available to download from CollegeforTN.org and can easily be adapted for such a presentation. In addition, we have provided a “college-going culture assessment” that can be used to foster a discussion around the culture in your school.

We recommend developing a “college-going culture advisory committee” made up of teachers, administrators, students, and/or community members. This working group should meet regularly, discuss ideas for how your school can foster a college-going culture among students, and guide the implementation of those ideas. We hope that the resources contained in this tool kit will help you implement Path to College events and foster a college-going culture in your elementary school.

Building a College-Going Culture

It is easy to talk about the concept of a college-going culture in the abstract, but what does it actually look like in a school? How can schools enhance their college-going culture? When building your school's College-Going Culture, reflect on the role of the 6 R's in your classrooms and also in your communications and outreach to the community.

- **Rigor**- Academically prepare all students for postsecondary education through rigorous curriculum and academic support.
- **Reach Higher**- Create school and community environments characterized by expectations, policies, and initiatives that support all students' pursuit of postsecondary education.
- **Relevance**- Connect career aspirations and skills to students' attainment goals.
- **Relationships**- Foster connections that strengthens students' postsecondary success.
- **Raise Awareness**- Promote early awareness of the steps necessary to prepare, apply, pay for, and succeed in postsecondary education.
- **Reinforce Action**- Assist students in completing critical steps of the college-going process.

What Research Says About College Access Work



Rigor

Academic preparation is the most effective means of increasing student postsecondary readiness, matriculation, and completion.

Bedsworth, W., Colby, S., & Doctor, J. (2006). Reclaiming the American Dream. Boston, MA: Bridgespan Group

A rigorous high school curriculum has greater impact on postsecondary degree completion than any other pre-college indicator of academic preparation, regardless of socioeconomic status or race.

Adelman, C. (1999). Answers in the tool box: Academic intensity, attendance patterns, and bachelor's degree attainment. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Reach Higher

Academic preparation and aspirations are not enough if schools do not have organizational norms and structures in place to effectively guide students through the postsecondary-going process.

Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J., Coca, V., Meller, E., Roddie, K., Gilliam, J., & Patton, D. (2008). From High School to the Future: Potholes on the Road to College. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

A school culture where the entire faculty ensure all students are prepared, support students in completing college applications, and push students to go to college is the single most consistent predictor of postsecondary enrollment.

Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J., Coca, V., Meller, E., Roddie, K., Gilliam, J., & Patton, D. (2008). From High School to the Future: Potholes on the Road to College. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Relevance

Creating strong links between career goals and degree requirements is key to postsecondary success. In fact, students making this connection are six times more likely to attain a degree.

Bedsworth, W., Colby, S., & Doctor, J. (2006). Reclaiming the American Dream. Boston, MA: Bridgespan Group.



College Access Research Continued

Relationships

Student relationships – both one-on-one and larger peer networks – have a significant impact on student decision-making, including decisions related to postsecondary planning.

Bouffard, S., & Savitz-Romer, M. (2012). *Ready, Willing, and Able: A Developmental Approach to College Access and Success*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

Research has determined that students who are surrounded by peers who are going to college are four times more likely to enroll than youth with no friends going to college.

Choy, S., Hom, L., Nunez, A., & Chen, X. (2000). *Transition to College: What Helps At-Risk Students and Students Whose Parents Did Not Attend College*.

In A. Cabrera, S. La Nasa, A. Cabrera, & S. La Nasa (Eds.), *Understanding the College Choice of Disadvantaged Students* (pp. 45 - 63). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Raise Awareness

Many students report discussions about postsecondary options begin during their junior and senior years of high school (TDOE, 2017). By this time, students have already made choices that may limit their postsecondary options. Schools that effectively counsel students into postsecondary take proactive steps to ensure students are thinking about their postsecondary and career options as early as possible.

Tennessee Department of Education. (2017). *Seamless Pathways: Bridging Tennessee's Gap Between High School and Postsecondary*. Nashville: TDOE.

One study demonstrates that 88% of students share their parents' beliefs regarding acceptable careers and the appropriate preparation needed for those professions. Valuing and enhancing the role families play in the college-going process is a key strategy.

Otto, L. (2000). *Youth Perspectives on Parental Career Influence*. *Journal of Career Development*, 27(2), 111.

To best leverage the influence parents have on students' decision-making, Bouffard and Savitz-Romer suggest practitioners engage families in college planning events, implement services that allow active collaboration between students and their families, and commit to ongoing, accessible communication with families.

Bouffard, S., & Savitz-Romer, M. (2012). *Ready, Willing, and Able: A Developmental Approach to College Access and Success*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

College Access Research Continued

Reinforce Action

It is key that adolescents become active agents in their own postsecondary futures.

Bouffard, S., & Savitz-Romer, M. (2012). Ready, Willing, and Able: A Developmental Approach to College Access and Success. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

Focus groups conducted as a part of Tennessee's current GEAR UP grant determined that students and families understand the intrinsic value of a degree but lack the knowledge and resources to turn postsecondary aspiration into reality.

One research study has shown that helping students select institutions, apply for admission, and complete a financial aid application increased college enrollment by 5.2%.

Oreopoulos, P., & Ford, R. (2016). Keeping college options open: A field experiment to help all high school seniors throughout the college application process. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

A separate study indicated that students who receive information and assistance in completing the FAFSA are 8.1 percentage points more likely to enroll in college.

Bettinger, E., Long, B., Oreopoulos, P., & Sanbonmatsu, L. (2012). The role of application assistance and information in college decisions: Results from the H&R Block FAFSA experiment. Quarterly Journal of Economics, 127(3), 1205 - 1242.

College-Going Culture Assessment



How does your school match up? How can you enhance your college-going culture within your school?

For each statement, write a score (1-3) for your school using the following scale:

Strongly Agree= 3

Agree= 2

Not Yet= 1

Rigor- increase the academic performance and preparation

- _____ All students are expected to pursue some form of postsecondary education and that expectation is conveyed clearly with support from school personnel.
- _____ All students have been directly taught what their TN Ready scores and ACT scores communicate about their college readiness.
- _____ Teachers generally believe that all students can achieve in higher academic level classes when the appropriate strategies and support structures are put into place.

Reach Higher- Enhance a College-Going Culture

- _____ Teachers, support staff, and leadership all communicate to students the same expectation that all students can and should go to college (TCAT, Community College, or University.)
- _____ Students are aware of the steps required to apply, enroll, and pay for college.
- _____ Teachers routinely teach engaging lessons with a college and career focus and seek to inspire students to pursue college.

Relevance- Students connect career goals with educational requirements

- _____ Teachers connect potential careers with standards and connect educational pathways to future careers.
- _____ Career fairs, guest speakers, and field trips expand students' understanding of meaningful careers and the educational pathways to get there.
- _____ Career and college exploration activities are integrated into regular coursework. For example, students research and write

Relationships- Foster meaningful relationships

- _____ Families are included at our school in the way that we talk about students' future pathways.
- _____ Students feel supported by faculty, as demonstrated by students having more than one trusted adult in the school building.
- _____ Engaging all families in order to build positive student relationships is important.

College Going Culture Assessment-Continued

Raise Awareness- Increase families' awareness about college and career

- _____ Our school hosts family college planning events aimed at helping students and families plan for high school, college, and a career.
- _____ Our school is a welcoming environment where family members are encouraged to visit and discuss their child's education.
- _____ Community leaders are invited to share their college and career experiences with students or to mentor students.

Reinforce Action- Increase graduation rates and college-enrollment

- _____ To your **students and parents**, the term "college" means any education and training after high school, including certificate programs, career and technical programs, apprenticeships, two- year degree programs, four-year degree programs, or military training.
- _____ Teachers include visual cues in their classrooms to encourage discussions about their college experience with their students. Examples include posting information about their alma mater or hanging copies of their college degree.
- _____ Educators, administrators, and staff encourage and counsel all students about postsecondary opportunities and the importance of pursuing education and training beyond high school.
- _____ College pennants and posters are visible in classrooms, halls, and common areas.
- _____ Academics are recognized as the number one priority in your school and academic achievement is considered a universal point of pride.
- _____ All students are encouraged to challenge themselves academically and take rigorous course work. All students are counseled on the importance of taking rigorous classes to prepare for postsecondary education.
- _____ Student work is highly visible in school and there are opportunities to showcase a wide variety of learning experiences.

Score Total

1 - 8 = Room for Growth

9 - 14 = Emerging College-Going Culture

15 - 18 = College and Career Ready School!



College Going Culture Assessment-Reflection

Discussion Questions:

In what areas is your school community excelling?

In what areas could you improve?

What can you, as an individual, do to enhance your school's college-going culture?

..... S E C T I O N 2

Implementing Path to College Events

.....

Included in this section:

- » College Application and Exploration Week
- » TN FAFSA Frenzy
- » College Planning Night
- » College Signing Day

Fall Semester



COLLEGE APP AND EXPLORATION WEEK



All About College Application and Exploration Week

You may have heard that College Application and Exploration Week is an event that encourages high school seniors to apply to college. While high school seniors are applying to college, middle school students across Tennessee can use this week to explore colleges and careers. The involvement of all your students in College Application and Exploration Week will add to the college-going culture in your community.

College Application and Exploration Week can be one of the most exciting and inspiring weeks of the school year, and the possibilities for great implementation are nearly endless! With proper planning, event promotion, and creative thinking, your College Application and Exploration Week will inspire all students to prepare for life after high school.

As you begin to plan your College Application and Exploration Week, tailor the events to the needs of your school. From the timing of events to the location, work with your school's administrators and teachers to plan an event that works best for your school and students.

No matter what format your College Application and Exploration Week takes, the following pages will give you ideas and resources that can be tailored to the needs of your school and can help you plan and host a successful College Application and Exploration Week.

The Path to College Online Yearbook



Creative displays of school and college spirit are a part of what makes College Application and Exploration Week so much fun! For a full range of photos that feature College Application and Exploration Week door decorations, activities, and more, please visit the GEAR UP TN Flickr page and click on our "College Application and Exploration Week" album at <https://tinyurl.com/yb3zdbgr>.



Suggested Reading List

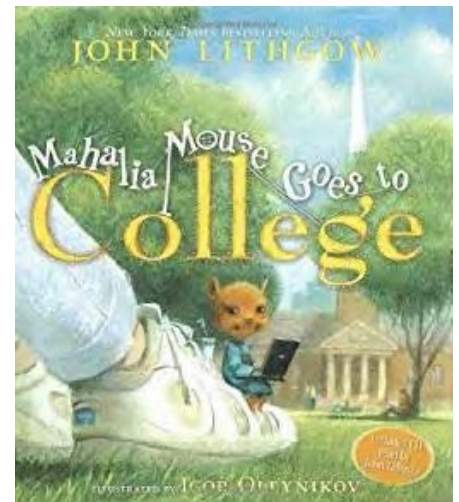


For each Path to College event, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission has curated a list of books that align with the event's goals and bring college, career, and financial literacy concepts to life for elementary school students. The books listed for College Application and Exploration Week focus on learning about college, and helping students envision themselves as future college students. The following descriptions are from Amazon.com.

Mahalia Mouse Goes to College

by John Lithgow

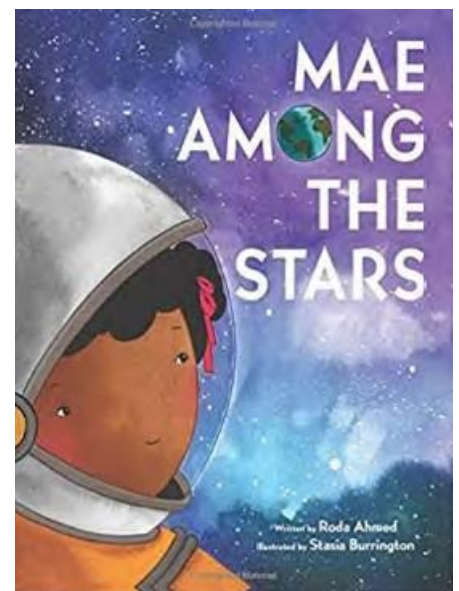
"Mahalia Mouse and her family live underneath Dunster House, an old Harvard dormitory. Foraging for food for her younger brothers and sisters, Mahalia gets trapped in a backpack and then finds herself inside a classroom far from home. Mahalia, intrigued by the lecture, starts attending classes and soon becomes a full-time student -- all the while wondering about the fate of her family. But when graduation day finally arrives, Mahalia has a wonderful surprise waiting for her."



Mae Among The Stars

by Roda Ahmed

"A great classroom and bedtime read-aloud, Mae Among the Stars is the perfect book for young readers who have big dreams and even bigger hearts! When Little Mae was a child, she dreamed of dancing in space. She imagined herself surrounded by billions of stars, floating, gliding, and discovering. She wanted to be an astronaut. Her mom told her, 'If you believe it, and work hard for it, anything is possible.' Little Mae's curiosity, intelligence, and determination, matched with her parents' encouraging words, paved the way for her incredible success at NASA as the first African American woman to travel in space."

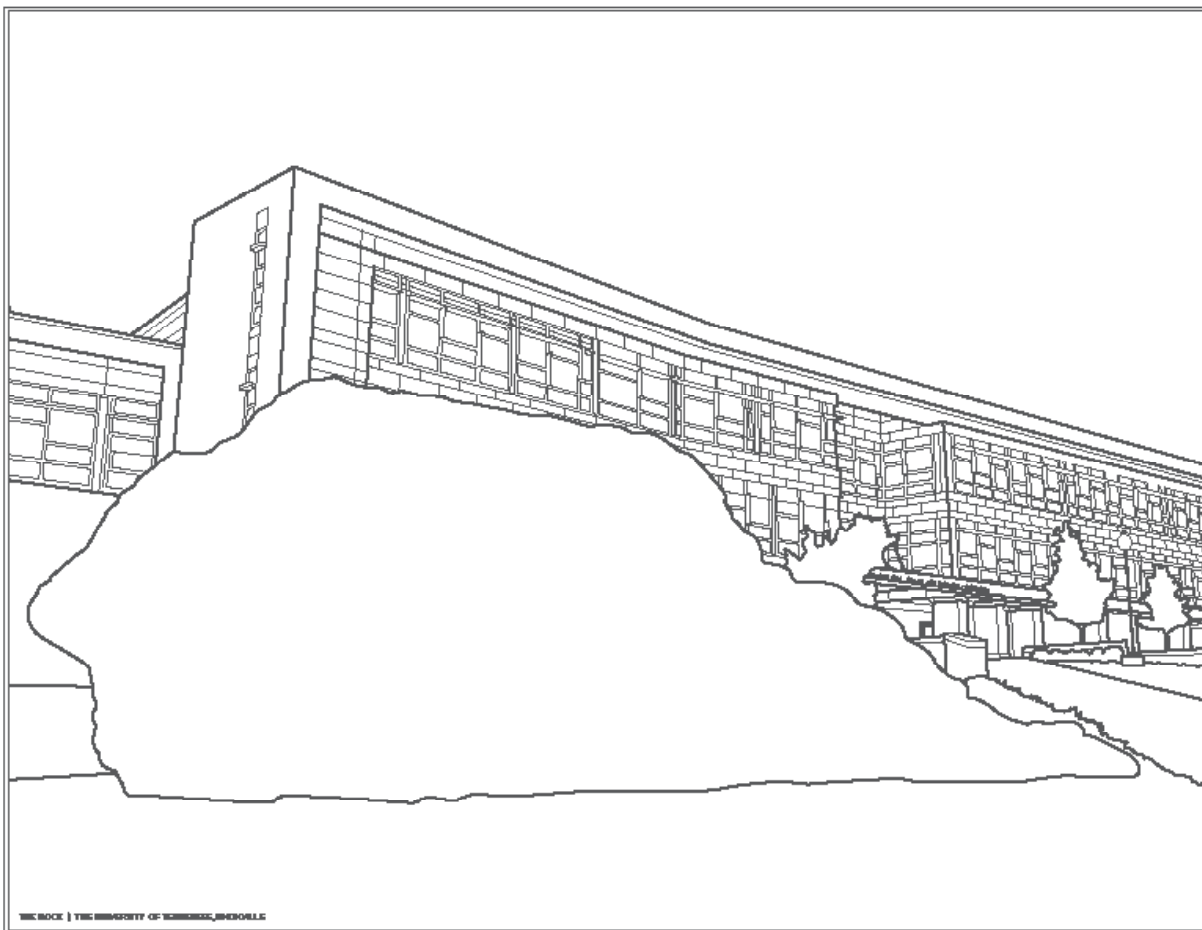


Designing Your Own College



This is an activity that can grow with your students and can be extended to include writing if you choose. Below is a coloring page of the University of Tennessee-Knoxville and their famous “Rock” which is painted nearly every day with messages from student groups. For the youngest grades, students may color in the campus and draw in themselves, their friends, and more. In older grades, ask students to design their own college on a blank sheet of paper. You can show them pictures of real colleges in Tennessee and out of state that have interesting features, like MTSU’s aerospace labs.

Extend the activity by having students write a paragraph or an essay about the three most important details that they included when they designed their college. Was it the great dorm where they had places to study and have fun with their friends? The cafeteria with 10 kinds of dinner choices to sample? A robotics lab? Ask students to share their responses with their classmates and consider highlighting colleges throughout the year that have some of the features your students dreamed up.



THE ROCK | THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE

College Spirit Week



Frame your College Application and Exploration Week with a College Spirit Week to help students identify themselves as future college-goers. Each day of the week can have a college theme and you can encourage your students to dress for the day. An example schedule of days is included below.

College Spirit Week Themes

Monday:

Bright Futures Day

Our futures are so bright we need shades! Wear your favorite pair of sunglasses to celebrate your bright future.

Tuesday:

Interview Day

It's important to know how to dress for success. Wear an outfit that you might wear for a job or college scholarship interview.

Wednesday:

Support Our Seniors!

Wear gear from your local high school to support the seniors applying to college! You can wear a t-shirt from the high school or high school colors.

Thursday:

College Colors Day

College will be here before you know it! Wear your favorite college's t-shirt or dress in the colors of your favorite school!

Friday:

School Spirit Day

The work you are doing in elementary school is building a foundation for your success in high school and beyond. Let's celebrate our school and your hard work so far this year! Dress in our school colors and gear—the wackier and tackier the better!

Start Your Day with College and Career: Morning Announcements



Use morning announcements to share information about upcoming college events and provide students with information about College Application and Exploration Week. Morning announcements can be fun—you can share college fun facts or even start a college trivia competition between homerooms or advisory groups. The first homeroom/advisory to email the correct trivia answer to the counselor wins! Prizes don't need to be expensive—they could be as simple as allowing the winning group to have a jeans or college t-shirt day! Use the following announcements as inspiration for your event.

.....

Sample Morning Announcements

Monday:

I hope that everyone is excited for the start of College Application and Exploration Week! This week, we will be celebrating with a variety of events [name a few]. However, I think I am looking forward to our college trivia competition the most! Every morning this week, I will be sharing a college trivia question. The first homeroom/advisory to email [counselor] at [counselor's email] will win [insert prize such as jeans day, college t-shirt day, or pizza party!]. So, here's your first question:

Even though college seems like it is a long way away, it is important to begin thinking about what type of college would be right for you. There are so many different types of colleges to choose from! You will find large and small schools, public and private colleges, technical, 2 year and 4 year degrees, colleges that are close to home and far away! There are so many options to choose from! **How many public community colleges (2 year) are in the state of TN?**

Answer: 13

Tuesday:

Most colleges and universities have mascots—They lead students in cheers during ball games, are featured on college t-shirts and hats, and are a symbol of school spirit! Mascots are often related to a school or town's history.

Today's question is about mascots and has two parts: **What is the name of the mascot for UT Chattanooga and what type of animal is he?**

Answer: Scrappy the Mockingbird



Sample Morning Announcements- Continued

Wednesday:

Colleges and universities are an important part of the history and fabric of Tennessee. In fact by the 1850's, Nashville had earned its nickname "the Athens of the South" because of how many colleges and universities were located in the city. Today's question has to do with the history of higher education in the state.

What was the first college in TN, what year was it founded, and where is it located? You'll need to provide an answer for all three parts of this question to win!

Answer: **Tusculum College, 1794, Greeneville, TN**

Thursday:

Countless celebrities have attended and graduated from college. Will Ferrell received a Bachelor's degree in Sports Broadcasting from the University of Southern California. Carrie Underwood received a Bachelor's degree in English from Northeastern State University. John Legend attended the University of Pennsylvania and earned a Bachelor's degree in English with an emphasis in African American Literature.

Now for today's question. Oprah Winfrey earned a full scholarship and graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Speech Communications and Performing Arts in 1973. From **what Tennessee school did she graduate?**

Answer: **Tennessee State University**

Friday:

Many college and university campuses have rich histories and interesting stories behind the naming of their buildings. One private Tennessee university has such a history. Before being converted into a school, the grounds of this university featured an art gallery, gazebos, a bowling alley, a bear house, and a zoo. As such, statues of animals (deer, dogs, and lions) are featured around the campus and one residence hall is named "bear house" after the house of bears that previously sat where it stands. **Which university is this?**

Answer: **Belmont University**

Getting the Whole School Involved



College Application and Exploration Week is more fun when the entire school pulls together to participate. Encourage all teachers and staff to **wear college gear** on designated days and to share information about their own college experience in a classroom warmup or lesson plan.

For the creatively inclined, encourage **college decoration with a door competition!** Offer a small prize to the teacher whose door decor takes the cake and invite community members or local college admissions representatives to act as judges. Students can join the decorating as well by decorating their lockers or designating a bulletin board for student decorations.

Bulletin boards are also a great way to promote a college-going culture on the walls of your school. Don't forget to use the posters and materials mailed to you in your Path to College box! There are countless great ideas for college-themed bulletin boards. Some include:

- Use a state of TN map and teacher's photos to show where they attended college.
- Post celebrity photos and list where they attended college.

Below are just a few examples of door decorations from previous College Application and Exploration Weeks. Visit our online yearbook at <https://tinyurl.com/yb3zdbgr> for more ideas and remember to share your winning decorations on social media, tagging #TNCollegeAppWeek.



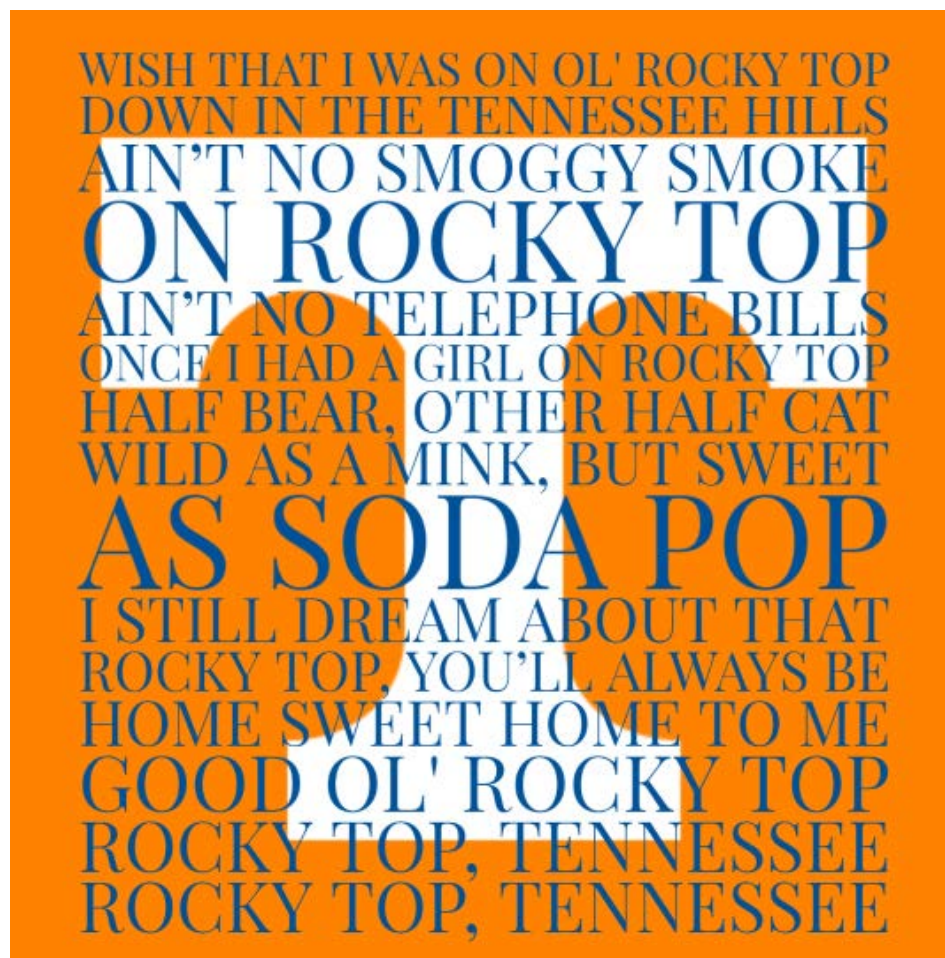
College Fight Songs



During College Application and Exploration Week, play college fight songs during morning announcements or during class changes. Consider creating a competition! Students can guess which school the fight song is from or what teacher attended that school. Students or homerooms who guess each fight song or teacher correctly all five days, get a prize at the end of the week (such as a jeans day or a pizza party).

There are many playlists on music channels including Spotify that are compilations of fight songs. Before engaging in this activity, be mindful of music or video sites like YouTube that may be blocked at your school and always preview the content of a song before playing it.

Some sites will include fun facts about the history of a school's fight song. Sports news site Bleacher Report ranked their Top 50 fight songs and put links to each song they chose, with the University of Michigan coming in first.



Human Bingo



Play human bingo by creating your own board or using the board provided below. To play, students will need to obtain signatures from school staff who meet the criteria listed on the board to get BINGO. For example, for the square that says, “attended college outside the state of TN,” students will need to find a school staff member to sign that square. Consider offering a prize for all of the students who get BINGO by the end of the day. Ask local colleges if they can donate small prizes like pencils or stickers, or give each winner a piece of candy.

Human Bingo Card



Instructions: Throughout the day, ask your teachers and school staff about their college experiences. Have the teacher/staff member sign one bingo box that applies to them. Each teacher/staff member can only sign your sheet once! To win, obtain signatures for 5 squares in a row (vertically, horizontally, or diagonally).

B	I	N	G	O
Attended college outside the state of TN	Majorred in English	Attended UT Knoxville, Chattanooga or Martin	Attended a private college/ university	Always knew that he/she wanted to be a teacher
Received a scholarship to attend college	Completed an internship for college credit	Lived on campus during college	Worked a part-time job while they were in college	Played a sport (intramural or on the school team) while in college
Completed AP, IB or Dual Enrollment classes while in high school	Applied to at least 5 colleges	FREE	Participated in an extracurricular activity in college (clubs, fraternities, etc.)	Can sing his/her college’s fight song
Had a double major	Had a minor	Lived off campus during college	Went to college in their hometown	Graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in 4 years or less
Changed their major in college	Completed a Master’s degree or higher	Studied a foreign language in college	Still wears a t-shirt from his/ her college	Attended a public college/university

Visit a College



When possible, offer field trips to tour colleges. Allow students the opportunity to see many different types of schools—TCAT, Community College, University. If you are able to take a field trip, make sure to prepare both your students and the university tour guides in advance.

Preparing both your students and your hosts will ensure a smooth campus visit and will help you to develop a partnership with the college/university you are visiting. Before your visit, review the college visit preparation checklist on the following page and provide your students with an opportunity to research the college they are visiting and create a list of questions. If field trips aren't possible, help students take "virtual" tours. Check college websites to see if they have video tours posted or consider using ecampustours.com.

College Visit Prep Worksheet



Note: this questionnaire is most appropriate for older students in 4th or 5th grade. For younger students, use these questions to make a class poster about what was learned on the trip.

Dear Student,

I hope that you are looking forward to our college visit to [Name of College] on [Date,Time] It is important that you are as prepared as possible for our visit, that you research the college in advance, and think of some questions that you can ask your tour guide. Visit the college's website, and find the answers to the following questions before our visit.

1. How many students attend the college? _____
2. Is this school public or private? (circle one) Public Private
3. How much is the tuition? _____
4. What type of school is this college? TCAT 2-Year 4- Year
5. What type of degrees does this college offer (circle all that apply)
Technical Certificate Associate Bachelor's Master's +
6. Name one major at this college that interests you. _____
7. At this college, can you live on campus? Yes No
8. What is the name of the college's mascot? _____

After researching the college, take a few minutes to write 3 questions that you could ask your tour guide during the visit.

Question 1:

Question 2:

Question 3:

College Visit Planning Checklist

1-2 Months in Advance

- Contact the college/university to request a campus visit. Schedule the date and time of the visit.
- Arrange for transportation for students to/from the visit.
- Draft any necessary permission slip forms and obtain required signatures from parents. Make sure to collect an emergency contact number for each student.
- Coordinate with the college visit office to determine how to divide your students up into smaller groups. The smaller the groups, the better experience your students will have!
- Divide your students into groups and determine the number of chaperones needed per group.
- Recruit volunteers (teachers and/or parents) to serve as chaperones during the college tour.
- Clearly define and review expectations with chaperones.
- Discuss lunch arrangements with the college/university. Will your students be able to eat lunch on campus? Will the college/university pay for the students' lunches or will you need to arrange payment with the dining hall?

1 Week in Advance

- Create nametags for all students. Make sure the nametags include the student's name, the name of your school, and the phone number of a chaperone.
- Prepare students for the visit. Allow students the opportunity to research the college they will be visiting and write questions for their tour guides. Adapt the worksheet on the previous page.
- Prepare the campus visit office and tour guides to make sure students will be able to see relevant places on campus. You might want to make sure they will see the library, the financial aid office, a dorm room, the cafeteria, and/or the student services office.
- Send home a reminder to parents including what the students will need to bring, the details of the campus visit, and an emergency contact number.
- Notify the tour coordinator of any students or chaperones who will need special accommodations so they may plan walking routes accordingly.

College Visit Day

- Follow all school procedures around checking students in and taking attendance at every stop.
- Consider bringing a portable speaker to play a playlist of college fight songs for the bus ride.
- Encourage students to ask questions about what they see on the campus.
- Be engaged in the college tour and presentation. Point out to your students things that you see. For example: See a row of huge cereal dispensers in the cafeteria? Ask your student tour guide what they eat for breakfast and watch students' reactions.
- Take pictures that you can display at school and share with other teachers and parents and families.

After Your Visit

- Write thank you notes to anyone you worked with on the campus to arrange the visit.
- Continue the conversation with students about college. What did they like? What else did they wish they'd seen? What do they still want to know more about?

College Scavenger Hunt



There are many ways to bring college and career information to your students with scavenger hunts. Some ideas include:

- Asking students to find teachers who attended certain colleges
- Placing images of college mascots throughout the school and asking students to try to spot them throughout the day
- Designing a college website scavenger hunt. This example from Joyce Hollins at Summit High School is provided (below) can be adapted for older students (4th and 5th grade).

Scavenger Hunt



Name of TN College/University: _____

Location: What is the name of the city the college is located? _____
and which region of the state is the college located? Circle one:

East Middle West

1. Size: What is the enrollment of the college/university (how many students attend)?

2. Is the institution Public or Private? _____

3. What types of Degrees are offered at this College/University? Check all that apply:

- ☐ Certificate/Degree Program
- ☐ Associates
- ☐ Bacheors
- ☐ Master's
- ☐ Doctorate (PhD, EdS, EdD)

4. List 5 college majors/programs of study that are offered at this College/University.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

5. What is the cost of Tuition? _____

6. Does the school have athletic teams you might enjoy watching?

7. Are their intramural sports you might want to play while attending that school?
Which ones? _____

8. List some of the campus organizations/activities for students at this college/
university: _____

9. What is the school's mascot? _____

10. What is this institution known for? What is an interesting fact? OR Why should a
student choose to attend this institution? _____

Incorporate College Activities Into Lessons

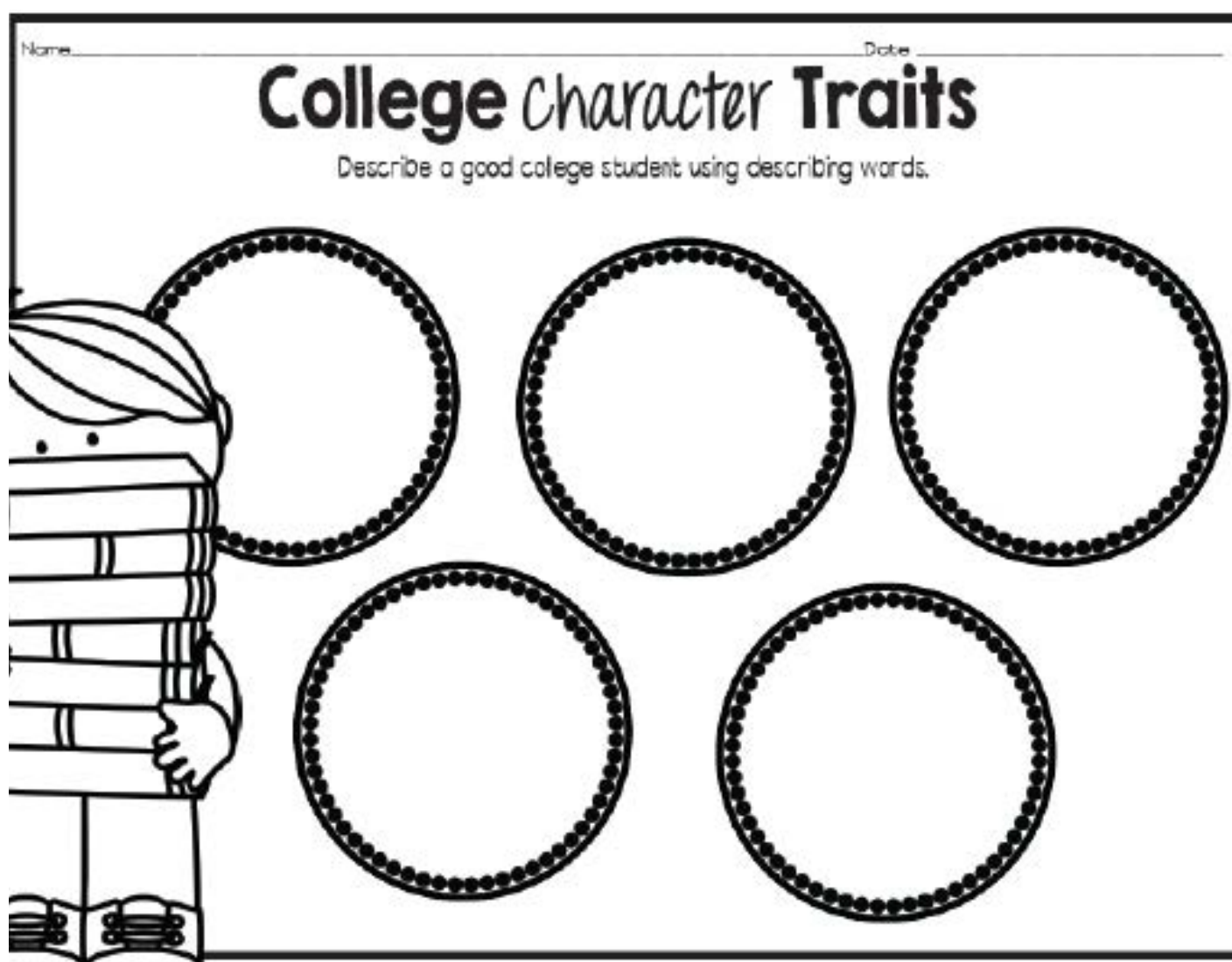
There are countless, creative ways to incorporate college concepts into everyday lessons during College Application and Exploration Week. Here are three samples of classroom activities that you can use during a balanced literacy block or in centers. Consider using the [College Skills Poster](#) you received in your Path to College Resource mailing as a reference point for students.

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College Character Traits



These samples are free printables from the blog Lesson Plan Diva.

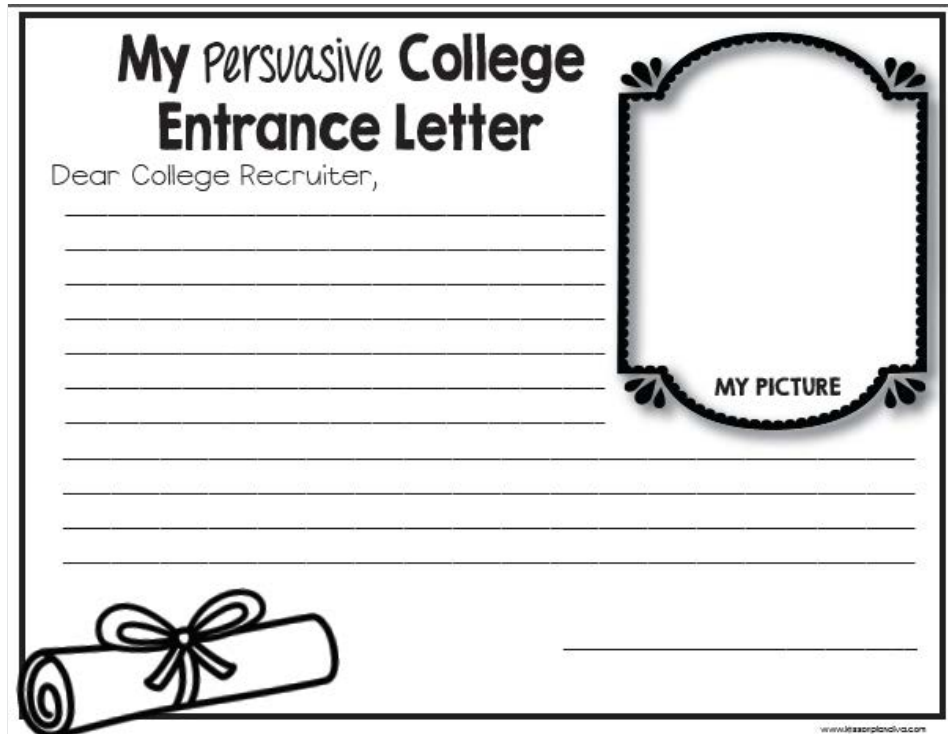
A worksheet titled "College Character Traits" with a subtitle "Describe a good college student using describing words." The worksheet features five large circles arranged in two rows (three in the top row, two in the bottom row) for writing. On the left side, there is a line drawing of a person's head and shoulders, wearing a graduation cap and holding a stack of books. The top of the worksheet has lines for "Name" and "Date".

My College Application



The form is titled "My College Application" with a rolled-up diploma icon. It includes fields for name, address, phone number, birthday, gender (male/female), parents' names, major, and college. A large rectangular box on the right is labeled "My Picture". At the bottom left, there is a section for "What do you want to be when you grow up? why?" with several lines for writing. A rolled-up diploma icon is also at the bottom left.

My Persuasive College Entrance Letter



The form is titled "My Persuasive College Entrance Letter". It begins with "Dear College Recruiter," followed by several lines for writing. A large rectangular box on the right is labeled "MY PICTURE". At the bottom left, there is a rolled-up diploma icon. The form is designed for a persuasive letter to a college recruiter.

Fall Semester



Financial Literacy During TN FAFSA Frenzy Season

High school seniors will begin submitting the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) on October 1st. This form will allow students to access critical financial aid resources from both the state of Tennessee and the Federal government, including the Tennessee Promise scholarship and the Pell Grant.

During the TN FAFSA Frenzy season, THEC/TSAC encourages elementary schools to promote financial literacy and the importance of saving for college.

In this section, you will find resources that include information about the TNStars 529 college savings plan, online and classroom-based activities from our partners at the Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission and on our Career and Financial Literacy game-based simulation: Adulting 101.



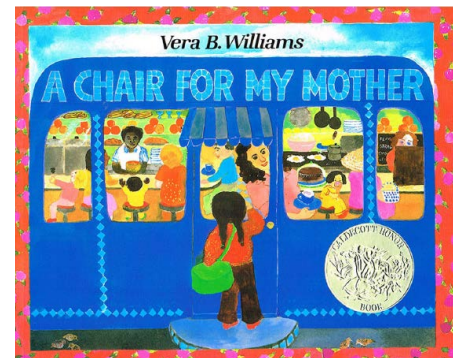
Suggested Reading List



For each Path to College event, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission has curated a list of books that align with the event's goals and bring college, career, and financial literacy concepts to life for elementary school students. The books listed for TN FAFSA Frenzy focus on learning about financial literacy and saving for a big goal. The following descriptions are from Amazon.com.

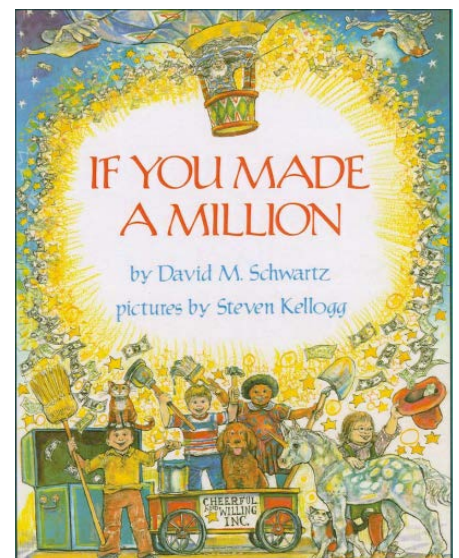
A Chair For My Mother by Vera B. Williams

"After a fire destroys their home and possessions, Rosa, her mother, and grandmother save and save until they can afford to buy one big, comfortable chair that all three of them can enjoy. After their home is destroyed by a fire, Rosa, her mother and grandmother save their coins to buy a really comfortable chair for all to enjoy."



If You Made a Million by David M. Schwartz

Have you ever wanted to make a million dollars? Marvelosissimo the Mathematical Magician is ready, willing, and able to explain the nuts and bolts -- as well as the mystery and wonder -- of earning money, investing it, accruing dividends and interest, and watching savings grow. Hey, you never know!



Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission



Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission

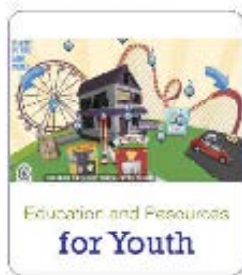
The Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission (TNFLC) strives to equip Tennesseans to make sound financial decisions in regard to planning, saving, and investing.



The TNFLC provides financial education for the whole family at no cost to the user. You can access our online educational resources at TNFLC.org.

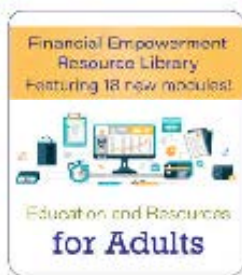
For Youth

Vault - Understanding Money is an online education platform designed for students grades 4-6. Through *Vault*, students learn about basic money management like the difference between needs and wants, and how money is used in daily life.



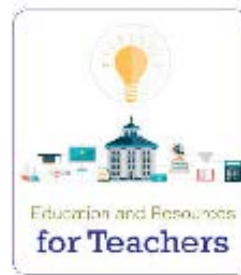
For Adults

The Financial Empowerment Resource Library leads Tennesseans through 18 unique, interactive modules covering topics like credit scores, budgeting, and retirement. Each module contains practical tips for everyday life.



For Teachers

TNFLC offers trainings to integrate financial literacy in the classroom. K-8 educators can attend through school in-service and free Saturday summits. Attendees will receive all necessary supplies and may be eligible for professional development credit.



Contact Us
TNFLC@tn.gov



@TNTreasury

@TNTreasuryDept

Visit Our Website
TNFLC.org

David H. Ullard, Jr.
State Treasurer



Vault Preview



One of the great, free resources available from the Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission is Vault, an online course powered by EverFi. Below you'll find an overview of the online course. On the following page, you will find instructions on how to create a teacher account and sign up for the course.

EVERFI



Vault Understanding Money

Vault - Understanding Money empowers students to be smart financial decision makers while they are early in their cognitive development. By leveraging performance-based games, *Vault* immerses students in real-life financial scenarios that focus on skill building and responsible decision making.

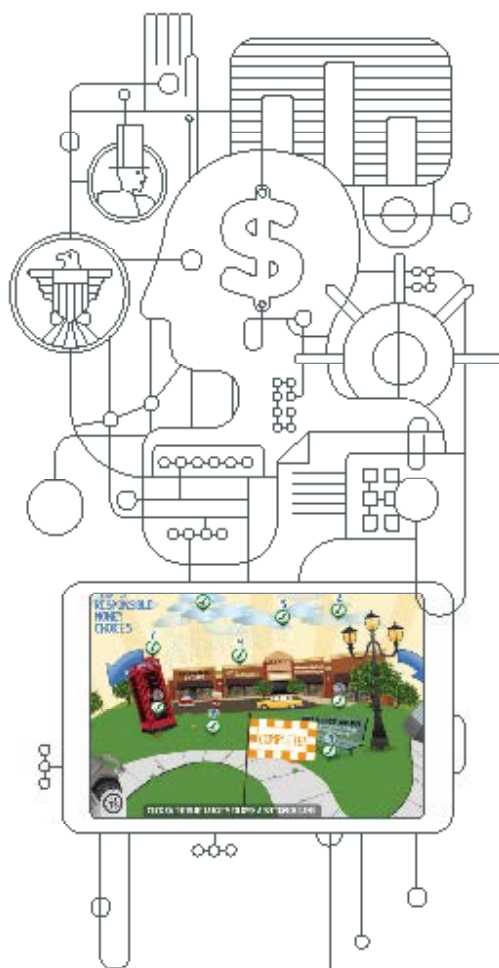
Covering everything from goal setting to making a budget, *Vault* delivers critical financial concepts in an engaging and fun way. *Vault* can be integrated into unit plans and used during class time, as a capstone project, or in a flipped classroom.

Course Highlights

- Real-time student score reports on your teacher dashboard
- Supplemental lesson plans
- Detailed standards alignment guide with your state-specific standards
- Answer Keys for all assessments
- Engaging discussion guides

Course Topics

- Responsible Money Choices
- Income and Careers
- Planning & Money Management
- Credit & Borrowing
- Insurance & Safety Management
- Savings & Investing



Recommended Grade Level: 4-6

Total Lessons: 6 (20-30 minutes each)

Total Time: 2-3 hours

Subject Fit: Math, Social Studies, Technology

Standards Alignment: Jump\$tart Standards, U.S. State Financial Literacy Standards

Vault Sign Up Instructions with EverFi

Vault is free for schools to use, but there is a brief registration process that you will need to complete in order to get started. Instructions are provided below. The course is sponsored by the Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission but for technical support, you should contact EverFi directly.

Course Flow



Learning Activity Highlights

What's the Difference Between Needs and Wants?

Whether it's food, rent, or internet, every household has many different expenses they must cover. How do you figure out which are the most important? In this activity, students explore the difference between needs and wants, and learn the importance of opportunity cost.

Borrowing and Credit - When you look at the price tag for a house or car, you may wonder: how will I ever earn enough cash to pay for that? The answer is, most people don't usually pay for these items in cash, but use credit instead. In this module, students learn how and when credit is used, and when it might be a smart financial decision.

Good and Bad Money Decisions - Some decisions are easier to make than others. When it comes to money, how do you evaluate which decision is a good one? In this activity, students look at real-life budgetary decisions, and explore what the consequences might be.

For more information about bringing this program to your school or district, visit everfi.com/k-12



EVERFI is the leading education technology company that provides learners of all ages education for the real world, through innovative and scalable digital learning.

EVERFI

3299 K Street NW
Washington DC, 20007
202-602-1295
www.everfi.com

Financial Fitness for Life Curriculum Example



By attending a free professional development session with the Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission, you will receive the Financial Fitness for Life Curriculum, including student workbooks with lessons and activities like the example on this page. If you have any questions about the Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission training summits or the Commission, please call 615-532-5892 or email TN.FLC@tn.gov.

NAME: _____ CLASS PERIOD: _____

Entrepreneurs Want to Earn a Profit

Directions: Read through each question and solve the problem. Make sure to show your work.

1. Martin said that Jackie's fruit and vegetable stand was very profitable. Profit is the income entrepreneurs earn from their business after paying all costs of production. Help Jackie determine whether she earned any profit last month. To determine Jackie's profit, we must subtract her costs of production from her sales revenue. If we write that out as a mathematical sentence, it would look like this:

PROFIT = SALES REVENUE - COSTS OF PRODUCTION

Use the following numbers for Jackie's revenue and costs of production to determine her profit last month. Solve the problem below. Show your work.

Jackie's sales revenue last month	\$200.00
Costs of production	
Fertilizer	\$ 20.00
Payment for tools	\$ 50.00
Water bill	\$ 30.00
Wages for Willie Mouse	\$ 15.00
Value of Jackie's work	\$ 20.00
Total costs last month	_____
Profit	_____

Martin's sales revenue last month	\$250.00
Costs of production	
Rent for stand	\$ 20.00
Payment for tools	\$ 50.00
Water bill	\$ 30.00
Wages for Willie Mouse	\$ 15.00
Seeds	\$ 10.00
Fertilizer	\$ 15.00
Value of Martin's work	\$ 25.00
Total costs of production	_____
Profit	_____

2. Martin just started his business. Here are Martin's sales revenue and costs of production for his first month in business. Determine whether Martin earned a profit from his business. Show your work here.

3. What if Martin had sold \$180 worth of fruits and vegetables in his first month? Would his profit be more or less than the first profit you calculated? Why?

4. What would happen if Martin's costs of production were greater than his sales revenue? Explain in a complete sentence.

Teach FAFSA Vocabulary



While your elementary students might not be ready to file a FAFSA, TN FAFSA Frenzy is an excellent time to teach students about the basics of financial aid. One great way to do this is to introduce students to financial aid vocabulary words. You could create a financial aid vocabulary word wall or use your morning meeting during a week in October to introduce a FAFSA word of the day. Below, we've provided a list of financial aid vocabulary words to help you brainstorm which words you might want to incorporate into your classroom. We recommend reviewing each word and asking students to find the words together as you go through the definitions.

.....

FAFSA- the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. A free form that students can fill out to find out how much money for college they can receive from the federal government. Many types of financial aid require students to complete the FAFSA.

Scholarship- financial aid support that a student receives that DOES NOT need to be paid back.

Loan- financial aid that a student borrows that needs to be paid back after college.

Grant- like a scholarship, financial aid support that DOES NOT need to be paid back.

Work-study- an on-campus job where students earn money to help pay for college.

Financial Aid- money that helps you pay for college.

Tennessee Promise- a state scholarship that provides free college tuition and fees to students who are earning an associate degree (2 year) or a certificate or diploma at a TCAT or community college.

Bursar- the person who manages student accounts at a college.

Need-based- financial aid that is awarded based on the amount of money the person needs based on their income.

Merit-based- financial aid that is awarded based on a student's grades or ACT/SAT scores.

Award- the full "package" of the different kinds of financial aid a college offers a student.

Deadline- the date by which you must complete a task to qualify for financial aid.

Borrow- money that you use now to pay for tuition and fees that you need to pay back.

Accept- when you agree to take the financial aid offered by a college, you accept that financial aid. You don't have to take all of the financial aid a college offers, only take what you need.

Decline- when you tell a college you do not want part or all of their financial aid award, you decline that financial aid.

Federal Financial Aid- financial aid that comes from the United States government.

State Financial Aid- financial aid that comes from the Tennessee state government.

Balance- the amount of money you owe to a college. If you have a bill for \$10,000 and accept a \$6,000 scholarship, the balance of what you owe is \$4,000.

Interest- a percent of a loan that you pay the bank or company as a fee for borrowing the money. Most student loans range from 4-7% interest.

Fee- additional costs a college charges to pay for things like student activities.

Tuition- the price you pay for attending classes in college.

Verification- a process after filing the FAFSA where students may need to provide additional information about their income to make sure that they receive the right amount of financial aid.

Start the Scholarship Conversation

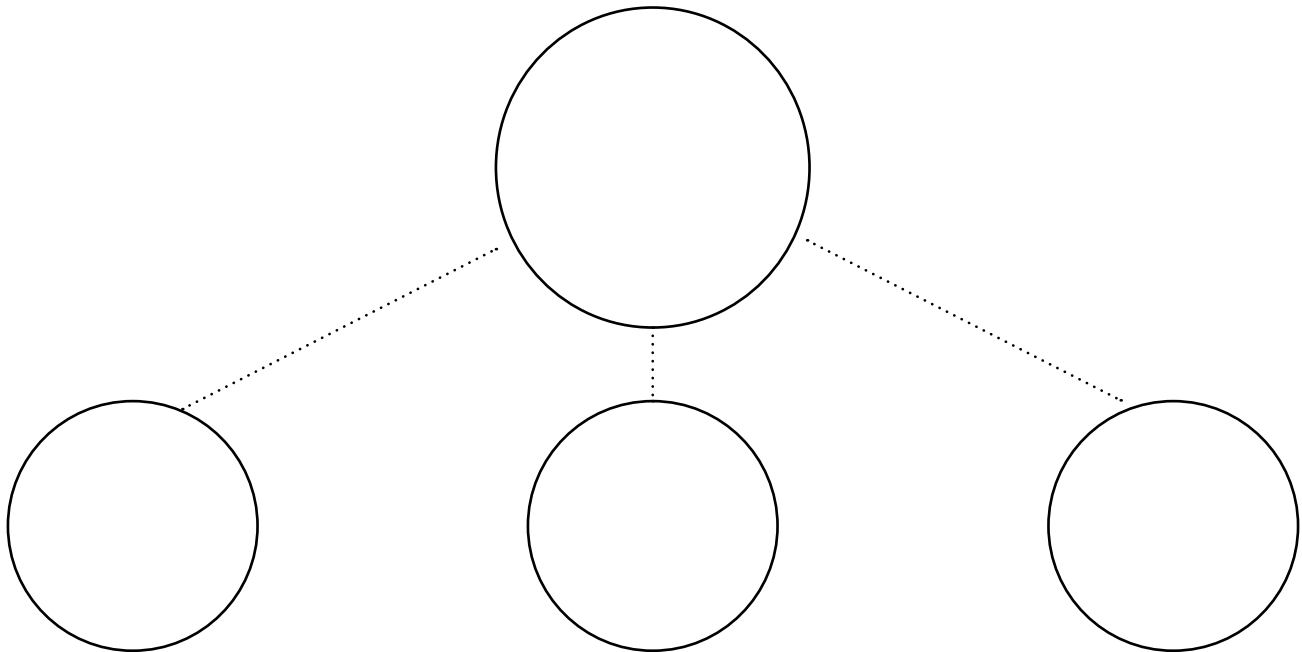


Financial Aid can feel overwhelming, but one of the most positive ways you can begin the conversation about paying for college with your students is by helping them understand scholarships.

Explain to students that scholarships are awarded by companies, organizations, and colleges for a variety of skills and talents that students display. Scholarships exist for students with high GPAs, a talent for art, musical abilities, athletic skills, commitment to the community and serving others, and hobbies that they enjoy.

Ask students to create a web with three or more activities or skills they have and brainstorm what they can do in elementary school and beyond to develop those skills and talents. Once you see the talents and hobbies that your students identify, make it a point to find scholarships at local institutions and on websites like www.FastWeb.com and www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search that match your students' interests.

College Scholarship Web



Adulting 101 Career Simulation Game



Have you ever wished that you could give your students a taste of what the world of adulthood is like? Are you looking for a way to bring budgeting and real-world decision making to life for elementary school students?

Take financial literacy and career exploration off the workbook page and into action with our career simulation game: Adulting 101.

Based on best practices and game simulations designed by Texas GEAR UP and West Virginia GEAR UP, Adulting 101 is designed to help students make budgeting decisions, understand the connection between higher education and career advancement, and experience the consequences and rewards of “adulting.”

In the game, each student receives a card that includes their career, their level of education (high school, TCAT, associate degree, bachelor’s degree, or advanced degree), their monthly paycheck, family size, and family scenario. ***Please note that due to the amount of math and reading involved in this game, we recommend playing with your fifth grade students.***

With this information, students will become members of the thriving metropolis of Volunteer Station, a fictional Tennessee town, and will need to purchase housing, transportation, utilities, food and home goods, and insurance. Students beware: bumps in the road like a doctor’s visit or an unexpected expense may pop up from the mysterious “green reaper” whose randomly distributed cards introduce an element of chaos into even the most balanced budget!



Adulting 101 Just for Tennessee

There are lots of career and life simulation games out there, so what makes Adulting 101 the right game for your elementary school?

Adulting 101 was developed by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission’s College Access and Success team with our state’s context and needs in mind.

The town of Volunteer Station, its salaries, and its expenses are based on real prices (we chose Chattanooga as our city inspiration). Salary and career information was taken from CollegeforTN.org.

Tennessee’s adult learner scholarship, Tennessee Reconnect, also appears in Adulting 101. Students whose randomly distributed career card has a Reconnect logo in the top right corner can visit the Reconnect station to advance their career by “reconnecting” and earning a certificate, diploma or associate degree.




Adulthood 101 Download Instructions








As with all Path to College materials, Adulthood 101 is available for download on CollegeforTN.org.


When you click on the link for Adulthood 101, you will download a zip file of all of the pieces you need to play the game at your school. The zip file will include:

- Game Setup Instructions
- Volunteer Instructions (how your volunteers will man the various game stations)
- Printing instructions
- Pre-sized banner files for each game station including Tennessee Treasures Real Estate, Get Going Gasoline, and more. These files can be put on a flash drive and brought to a local print shop with no customization needed.
- Student materials including career scenarios and ledgers. These are pre-sized for easy printing at your school or local print shop.

If you have any questions about implementing the game at your school, please contact Suzette Telli, suzette.telli@tn.gov, or Kevin Edwards, kevin.edwards@tn.gov.



 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D1 Location: Near Downtown 2 BR/2 BA 1015 sq. ft. \$339,900 \$2,160</p> <p>Offers great access to local boutiques, restaurants, coffeehouses, galleries, salons and day spas. Fitness Center, Club House, Laundry Facility, Pool, Pets Welcome.</p>	 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D5 Location: Near Downtown 2 BR/1 BA 800 sq. ft. \$54,900 \$422</p> <p>Handyman special! Great investment opportunity for someone willing to put in the work. 6 ft. Chain Link Fenced Yard, Convenient to Downtown</p>
 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D2 Location: Near Downtown 1 BR/1 BA 750 sq. ft. \$199,900 \$1,330</p> <p>A stone's throw from all the restaurants, concert venues, and all the Entertainment District has to offer. This ground floor condo has a private entrance on it's own private patio.</p>	 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D6 Location: Near Downtown 3 BR/2 BA 1509 sq. ft. \$309,900 \$1,975</p> <p>Beautifully restored home in historic downtown neighborhood. 10 ft. Ceilings, Lush landscaping!</p>
 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D3 Location: Near Downtown (Rental) 1 BR/1.5 BA 900 sq. ft. \$1,400/Month</p> <p>Within walking distance of downtown amenities. Hardwood floors, granite counters, new construction. This one won't last!</p>	 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D7 Location: Near Downtown 2 BR/1 BA 1600 sq. ft. \$269,900 \$1,774</p> <p>Historic downtown neighborhood! Newly renovated kitchen and bath.</p>
 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D4 Location: Near Downtown (Rental) 2 BR/1 BA 1034 sq. ft. \$1,500/Month</p> <p>Find your place! Enjoy an open floor plan with exposed brick, hardwood floors, and an updated kitchen and bathroom.</p>	 <p>Area 2 Listing #: C1 Location: Within City Limits (Rental) 3 BR/2 BA 1430 sq. ft. \$1,475/Month</p> <p>Centrally located with access to schools, shopping, and entertainment. Fitness Center, Bocce Court, Business Center, Pet Friendly, Club House, High Speed Internet, Playground, Pool</p>



PLUGGED IN ENERGY INC. 

SUPERFOODS, SUPERFRESH SUPERMARKET



Share Financial Aid Resources with Parents

It is never too early to share information with parents about financial aid. Here are some suggestions for effective ways to communicate that information:

Host a Middle School College and Financial Aid Night: Invite parents to your school for an evening event and review the College Planning Night PowerPoint with them. Consider inviting a TSAC outreach coordinator to present the financial aid and scholarship information with you. Make sure to promote your event through every channel possible (social media, flyers, phone calls to parents, etc.) using the resources we provided in the promotion section of this handbook.

Webinars: Create a webinar for parents with introductory financial information, terminology, or promote existing webinars (such as the Financial Aid webinars on www.TNFAFSAFrenzy.gov) in your school communications.

Share Opportunities for Adults: Whenever you discuss college planning with parents and families, be sure to mention the Tennessee Reconnect scholarship, which allows adults to complete an associate degree, certificate or diploma tuition-free. See page 38 for a sample flier.

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Questions?

To the right is a sample slide from THEC/TSAC's Elementary and Middle School Financial Aid Presentation, available for download at www.collegefortn.org.





Tennessee Reconnect is a scholarship for adults to earn an associate degree or technical certificate, tuition-free.

Four easy steps to Reconnect:

- ☐ **1. Complete** Complete the **application** at **TNReconnect.gov**.
Complete the scholarship application and review your results from the Tennessee Reconnect Success Plan.
- ☐ **2. Apply** Apply to your local **community college or eligible Tennessee Reconnect institution**.
- ☐ **3. File** File the **FAFSA** at **FAFSA.ed.gov**.
Contact your local community college or Tennessee Reconnect Community if you need assistance with the FAFSA.
- ☐ **4. Enroll** Enroll in a degree or certificate program at least part-time and launch **your future**.

To be eligible for the Tennessee Reconnect scholarship, you must:

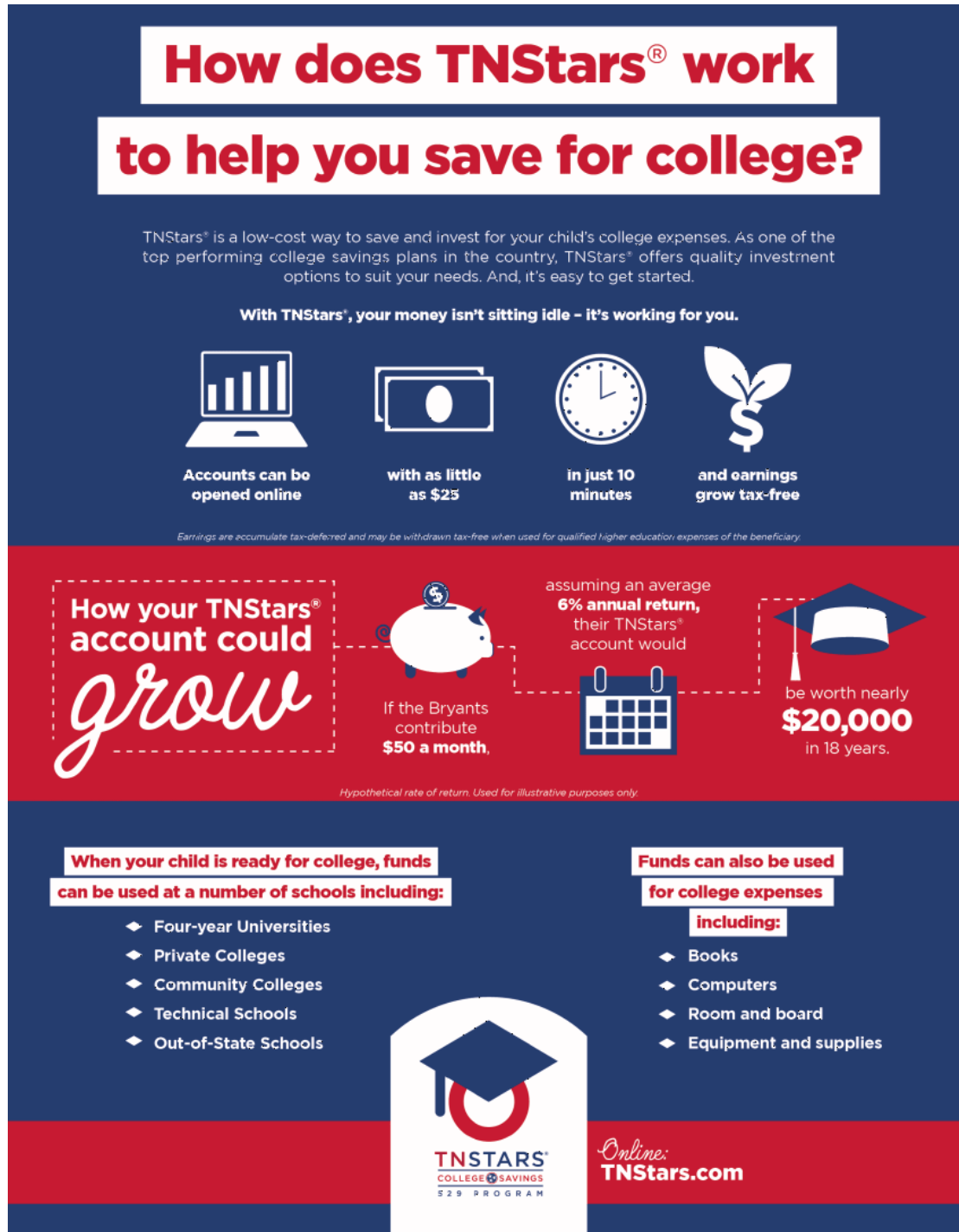
- Not already have an associate or bachelor's degree.
- Have been a Tennessee resident for at least one year.
- Be determined as an independent student on the FAFSA.

Visit TNReconnect.gov for all eligibility requirements.



College Savings with TNStars 529 Plan

This infographic and the downloadable flier on the following page can be posted on your school's website, displayed on a bulletin board, or printed and handed out to parents at an event. Encourage parents to visit www.tnstars.com to learn more about saving for college.



TNStars Downloadable Flier



*Because dreams
can come true.*

**Start saving now and choose a plan
that grows with your child.**

Even when the dreams are big and the future seems far away, a little planning today goes a long way tomorrow. You can start planning now with the **TNStars® College Savings 529 Program** and help your child become what they dream to be. The sooner you start saving for their future, the more time your money has to grow. It's easy to open a TNStars® account. You can do it online in minutes and start saving today.

**Visit TNStars.com
to get started today.**



*To learn about TNStars®, investment objectives, risks, costs
and to read the official statement, go to TNStars.com.*



Spring Semester



About College and Career Planning

What is Path to College's College and Career Planning event?

At the high school level, this event is known as College Planning Night. It is an event designed to engage parents in the college-going process while preparing high school juniors and their parents for the application process the following year.

In elementary school, we hope that you will implement College and Career Planning in the way that most makes sense for your students. This could take the form of a career fair with local professionals, an information session about local colleges, or something entirely different. As with TN FAFSA Frenzy events, you can also use this time to introduce adult programs like the Tennessee Reconnect scholarship for parents and families who may be interested in returning to school themselves.

A majority of the resources that you will see in this section relate to hosting a career fair. We know that in all grades, discussions of college and career options should go hand-in-hand. While high school juniors may focus primarily on college and the college-going process, elementary schools should feel the freedom to use this time to explore both college and career during this event.

Expectations of Host Sites

The event should be what works best for your individual school. This event is a great time to engage parents, but you can also host College and Career Planning activities during the school day and send information home to families in the form of fliers and brochures.

When should you host College and Career Planning events?

College and career activities occur throughout the year. When we consider the school calendar and the other Path to College Events your school will be hosting, we encourage you to schedule these College and Career Planning activities during the Spring semester or third quarter of the year.

Suggested Reading List

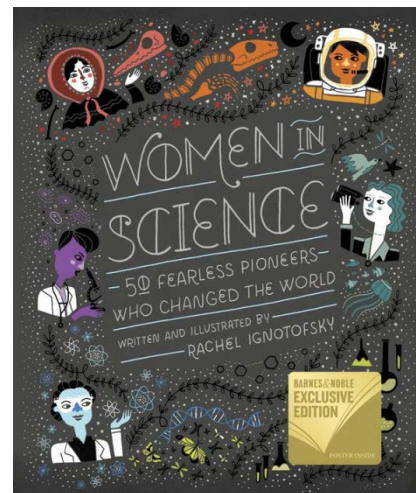


For each Path to College event, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission has curated a list of books that align with the event's goals and bring college, career, and financial literacy concepts to life for elementary school students. The books listed for College and Career Planning are focused on showcasing a diverse spectrum of careers. The following listings are from Amazon.com.

Women in Science

by Rachel Ignotofsky

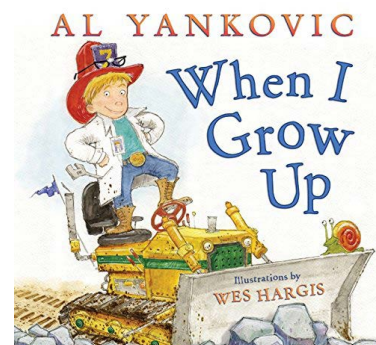
"A charmingly illustrated and educational book, New York Times best seller *Women in Science* highlights the contributions of fifty notable women to the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) from the ancient to the modern world. This fascinating collection also contains infographics about relevant topics such as lab equipment, rates of women currently working in STEM fields, and an illustrated scientific glossary. The trailblazing women profiled include well-known figures like primatologist Jane Goodall, as well as lesser-known pioneers such as Katherine Johnson, the African-American physicist and mathematician who calculated the trajectory of the 1969 Apollo 11 mission to the moon."



When I Grow Up

by Al Yankovic

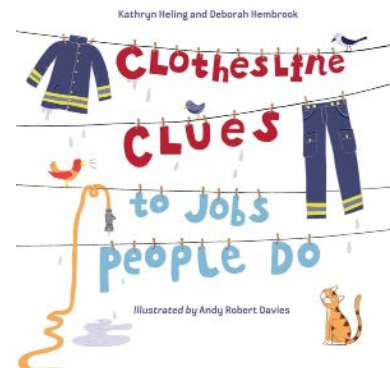
"It's Show-and-Tell time in Mrs. Krupp's class, and Billy just can't wait for his turn! Today the class is discussing what they want to be when they grow up, and our exuberant eight-year-old hero is bursting to tell everyone about his future career plans. In dazzling wordplay and delicious rhymes, Billy regales his patient teacher and amazed classmates with tales of the variety of careers he wants to pursue--each more outlandish and wildly imaginative than the last!"



Clothesline Clues to Jobs People Do

by Kathryn Heling

"Who wears what to work? The clues in each lively verse can be spotted hanging from the clotheslines. A mail carrier's uniform, the artist's brushes, and the chef's apron all hang from the clothesline. Then turn the page to learn which professionals wear and use the special gear in the jobs they do. Clever illustrations show the workers helping one another, and in the end, everyone joins together for a celebration that is out of this world. A perfect choice for reading aloud and encouraging kids to join in the guessing and reveal."



Envision Your Future Career



As you introduce careers through books, lessons, and even a career fair, encourage students to envision their future career. Consider using the **16 Career Cluster Posters** your school received as part of the Path to College resource mailing for inspiration. Ask students to draw themselves in their career, along with any details about their life. If they want to be an astronaut, encourage them to draw computers and a space ship that they would use in their work. For a chef, they could draw themselves in a kitchen with all of their fresh ingredients. Extend the activity for older students by incorporating a writing reflection where students explain the career they chose and three skills or resources they would need to do that job well.

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Bring Your Personality to Career Exploration



At the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, we take college and career readiness seriously, but we also aren't afraid to get a little silly and have a lot of fun! Consider ways to decorate your classroom that bring in your personality. Blogger The Creative Counselor loves and collects Mr. Potato Head toys. She realized that her beloved spud could help her celebrate her school's Career Month by dressing Mr. Potato Head for success in his many careers: astronaut, police officer, construction worker, plumber, and many more. Her bulletin board was fun and inviting, and students loved seeing Mr. Potato Head change his career outfits. To read her full blog post, visit <http://thecreativecounselor.blogspot.com/search?q=mr+potato+head>.



Career Alphabet Challenge



Provide students with the career alphabet challenge worksheet and ask them to name as many careers as possible that begin with each letter of the alphabet. You can also do a school-wide challenge where each classroom works together to create a list of careers. The class with the most careers can win a prize!

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Career Alphabet Worksheet



A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P
Q	R	S	T
U	V	W	XYZ

Host a College and Career Fair



Hosting a college and career fair is an excellent way to encourage students to begin to think about their futures as well as to get the community involved in your school. Planning a college and career fair can seem like a big undertaking—but the benefits for students are immeasurable. On the following pages, we've provided a college and career fair planning timeline and checklist based on the planning resources used at Karns Middle School to assist you with planning your event.

Career Fair Planning: Timeline and Checklist

6 Months Before Your Event:

-Convene a career fair planning team to assist with planning your event. This team could include counselors, teachers, administration, parents, and/or community members. Consider also including students in some of your planning meetings. They will be able to give you great insights on careers their classmates are interested in and could help you to promote and build excitement about the event.

-As early in the school year as possible, provide an interest inventory to your students. This will allow you to try to recruit the jobs/careers that are of interest to many of your students, increasing the relevancy of the College and Career Fair to the intended audience.

-Schedule a time, date, and location for your event. You will need a large space—many schools use their gym, cafeteria, or auditorium.

-Finalize the format and structure for your event and make sure you have access to all of the necessary materials. Make sure to consider the following questions:

- How will students participate in the event? Will they be able to come during the school day? When? Will students be able to attend the career fair that day during a certain class period? Will all grade-levels participate?
- How will career representatives set up in your space? Will they each have their own table or will they need to share? Will you provide chairs for your representatives?
- Who is invited to your event? Are you only inviting students or will you also invite parents to attend the fair?

3-6 Months Before Your Event

-With your planning team, brainstorm a list of the careers you would like to see represented at your fair and determine what companies or organizations in your community might be able to represent that career.

-Reach out to the individuals and/or companies you have identified to solicit their participation in the career fair. As you receive positive responses, it is helpful to keep track of the representative's name, company/career, and contact information. You will need this to follow up before the event. Some recruitment ideas include:

- Reaching out to parents. They frequently enjoy participating at the school their student attends.
- Allowing students to participate in meetings and directly recruit.

- Use your social networks and those of your planning team to find contact persons in the careers on your list.
- Addressing community business groups about the importance of the College and Career Fair.

-Consider offering an incentive for career representatives to participate. Karns Middle School hosts their career fair in the morning and offers lunch afterwards for all participants.

1 Month Before Your Event

-Contact all confirmed participants with the event details. Make sure to collect any information from participants about their space needs. Specifically, ask if they will need to be in close proximity to an outlet or if they require a certain amount of space for any exhibits they are bringing. Clearly outline to participants what you will be providing and what they will be responsible for. Encourage them to make their booth as interactive as possible. For example, firefighters may bring their suits to try on, beauticians may offer a few makeovers, newscasters may bring their cameras or microphones, etc.

-Begin promoting your event to both students and parents (if included in the event). Solicit the help of the students on your planning team to promote the event with social media. Include information about the event in morning announcements. Encourage teachers to discuss careers in their classrooms.

-Allow students the opportunity to complete career inventories on www.CollegeforTN.org so that they can target representatives from those careers during the career fair.

-Consider ways to increase student engagement during the fair. At Karns Middle School, representatives were given raffle tickets. When students asked particularly thoughtful questions about their career, they wrote the student's name on the ticket. At the end of the day, tickets were drawn for students to receive donated prizes.

-Create a layout for your space. Using the list of confirmed presenters and the information you gathered about their space needs, begin to assign career representatives to tables/locations.

-Create a student interview form. Students should interview at least one of the participants about their job or career. In order to create some accountability, teachers can grade these interviews (for completion only).

-Make sure students are asked to talk to higher education representatives (high school or college representatives). One important aspect of the Career Fair is to connect careers with education. This aspect can be added to the student interview form.

-Invite the media to attend the fair. Local papers and/or television representatives enjoy reporting on community and school events.

Week of the Event

- Follow up with your career representatives and remind them of any last minute details.
- Review event logistics with all school staff. This is especially important if students will be rotating through the fair during class periods.
- Create a list or brochure of all career representatives that have confirmed their attendance for the fair. Distribute the brochure to students in advance.
- Prepare students for the event. Encourage teachers to discuss the fair with their students during their advisory/enrichment periods. Students can plan which booths they would like to visit and can also brainstorm a list of questions for the representatives.
- Finalize your space layout and print several copies. You may choose to display the layout at the event so both representatives and students can find their assigned tables.
- Assign members from your planning team and volunteers from your school community with tasks for the day of the event. It will be important to have volunteers assigned to the following tasks:
 - Traffic Direction- Make sure you have several volunteers outside the school to show career representatives where they can park and direct them to the location of the college and career fair.
 - Check in Table- Set up a check in table for career representatives to sign in (which may be your school policy) and to tell representatives the location of their booth
 - Student Helpers- Assign students from your planning team to help on the day of the event. Students can be extremely helpful with showing representatives to their tables and/or with helping representatives unload any supplies.
 - Staff Helpers- On the day of the event, it will be impossible for you to help everyone and answer all of their questions. At Karns Middle School, staff helpers were given a balloon to carry around that allowed you to easily spot them in the crowded auditorium and representatives were told to seek out these staff members if they had questions.
 - Water and/or Snack Distributer- If your event will be over the course of many hours, it is a nice gesture to your representatives to provide them with water and/or a snack half way through. Solicit the help of students and/or staff to distribute these.

Day of the Event

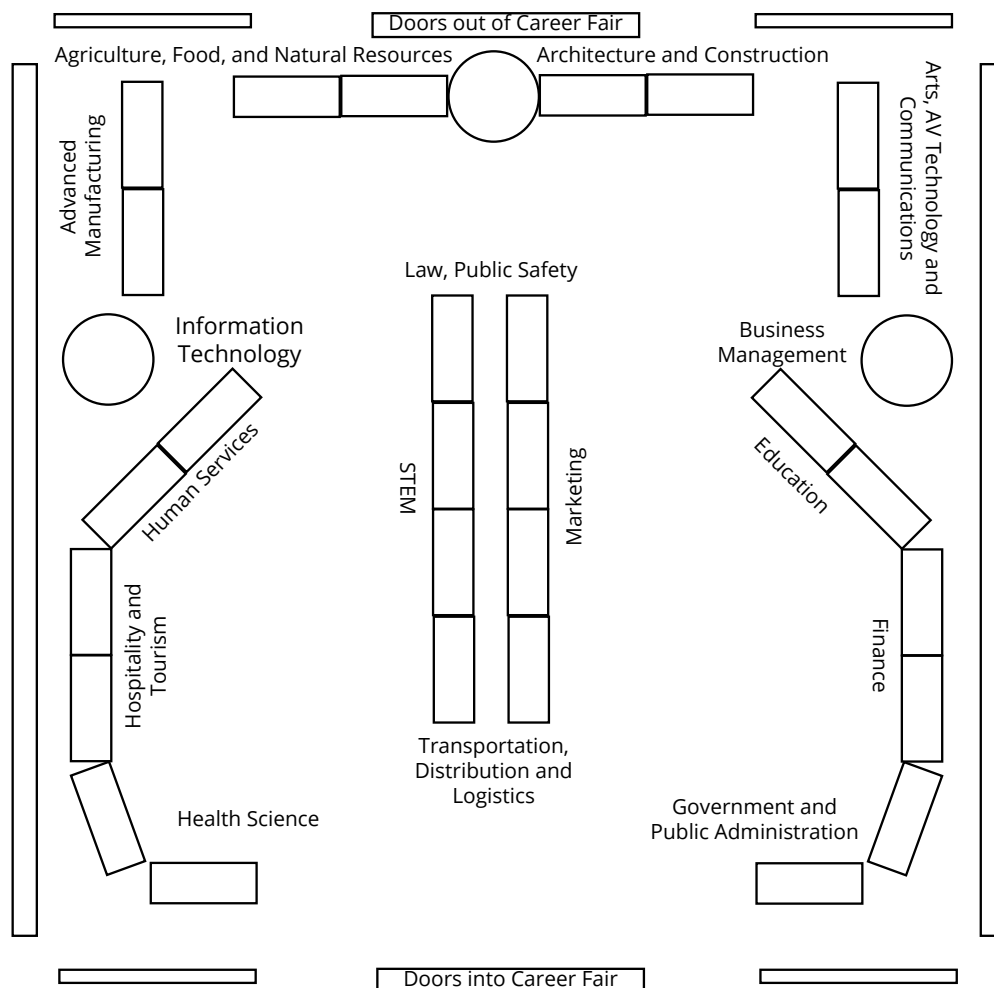
- Double check your space layout and print extra copies. Make sure your helpers and your check in table volunteers have copies of the layouts to be able to direct representatives. Consider posting a large copy of the layout for all to see.
- Ensure that your tables and chairs are set up correctly.
- Print signs for your tables. Include the representative's name and company/career and place the sign on their assigned table.
- Meet with your volunteers before the event starts to make sure they are comfortable with their role for the day.

- Set up your check in table—make sure that your representative sign in system is ready to go!
- Add important “day of” information to the morning announcements.

After the Event:

- Thank your volunteers and participants. Consider sending handwritten notes from students or thank you emails.
- Meet with your career fair planning team to debrief the event. Discuss what went well and what could be improved for next year’s fair. Consider distributing a survey to representatives to get their feedback about the experience.
- Send evaluation forms to students and to teachers. Their feedback is essential to next year’s planning!

Sample Career Fair Layout



College and Career Fair Interview Questions



You've planned a great college and career fair experience, but in order to ensure your event is successful, students need to be prepared to engage in thoughtful conversations with your volunteers! Below is a list of questions adapted from Vermont Student Assistance Corporation and VT State GEAR UP that will help get conversations going amongst your students and the professionals at your fair.

1. Would you please describe a typical day at your job? What tasks do you normally do every day or every week?
2. Do you work with a team or is most of your work done by yourself?
3. What do you like best about your career? What do you like the least?
4. What are some of the decisions you have to make at work?
5. What are some of the benefits at your job? Does it offer health insurance, vacation time, or retirement savings?
6. How do you balance your work with other things in your life, like spending time with friends and family or hobbies?
7. What kind of training or education is needed to work in your job?
8. What kind of personal qualities should someone have to do well and be happy in your job?
9. If I am interested in a job like yours, what should I do while I'm in elementary school to get ready?

Careers on Wheels



Careers on Wheels is a variation of a career fair, but it is designed to be hosted in your school's parking lot and feature all the careers that are "on wheels!"

Invite representatives from mobile careers to bring their trucks to your school and allow students to tour the trucks and talk with the representatives about their careers. Most of the planning steps will be the same as planning for a career fair, so use and adapt those resources for your planning. Here are some ideas of who to invite:

- Firefighters
- EMTs / Ambulances
- Police Officers
- SWAT Team
- Animal Control
- Food Truck or Ice Cream Truck
- Media with mobile broadcasting or weather vans
- Mobile Health Clinics or Dentists
- Mobile Boutiques
- 18 Wheelers
- Race Car Drivers and Pit Crew
- Cable and Telephone Companies
- Pest Control
- Geek Squad
- Construction (bulldozers, forklifts)
- Pest Control
- Landscaping
- Home Repair (flooring installation, HVAC-R, plumbing)

Many states and school districts host Careers on Wheels Days and resources online abound. Here is a brochure from Collin College in Texas.

Careers On Wheels

Stick shifts and safety belts. Steering wheels and four tires on the road. These are some of the things that drive various kinds of careers in our community and around the globe. Careers On Wheels provides a venue for Collin County middle school students to see some of these vehicles up close and personal.

To register, visit <http://careersday2009.eventbrite.com> or complete and submit the form attached.

Global EDGE Tech Prep Consortium of Collin College

2200 W. University Drive
McKinney, Texas 75071
Phone: 972.548.6723
Fax: 972.548.6726
E-mail: globaledge@ccccd.edu
www.ccccd.edu/globaledge

Global EDGE Tech Prep Consortium
Third annual

Careers on Wheels Day

9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Friday, May 15

at
Collin College Preston Ridge Campus
9700 Wade Blvd. in Frisco

COLLIN COLLEGE **GLOBAL EDGE**

Host a Career Luncheon

Hosting a career luncheon allows your students to learn more about careers that interest them in a much more informal environment. To organize a career luncheon, begin by surveying your students to understand their career areas of interest. From there, begin reaching out to professionals in your community that work in those career fields and invite them to participate in your careers luncheon. On the day of the luncheon, match students (or groups of students) with a professional in their field of interest for lunch.

You can choose to host this luncheon in your school cafeteria or off-site. Some schools have chosen to make such lunches more formal, have them catered off-site, and encouraged their students to wear “interview clothes” to give the lunch a more professional atmosphere.

When planning such a lunch, do what works best for your school, but always make sure that your students are prepared. Allow them time to research the career they are matched with and write a list of questions for the professional that will be joining them.

Some communities have created large, annual career luncheon events. Below is a photo from Tedesco Building Services employees at the 23rd Annual UCS Career Focus Luncheon in Michigan. This event brings sixth graders together with local employers to introduce area students to a variety of career options.



College and Career Lunchtime Learning

During lunch once a week or bi-weekly, host a “college corner” where students can eat with you and ask questions about college. Consider having themes for your “college corner.” For example- applications, scholarships, choosing a major, being successful in college, etc.

There are many ways to make your college lunch a fun and sought after activity in the cafeteria. Consider offering college swag to students who participate or having a themed treat for different colleges. Bring a box of University of Tennessee-Knoxville “big orange” popsicles or MTSU “true blue” blueberry muffins.



Spring Semester



About College Signing Day

What is Tennessee's College Signing Day?

College Signing Day in Tennessee began as an event to celebrate seniors going to college and an opportunity to encourage a college-going culture among all students, with college meaning any formal education that is continued after graduating from high school.

Focused on celebrating ALL students who are continuing their education after high school, Tennessee's statewide College Signing Day event takes its cue from the tradition of college athletics, where high school athletes get national attention as they sign letters of intent to attend a particular institution. In a similar way, College Signing Day is intended to publicly commend seniors who commit to attend college or join the military. Seniors will have the chance to publicly proclaim their plans which will promote a college-going culture in your school community.

Elementary schools are encouraged to partner with local high schools to celebrate their college-bound seniors and further instill college aspirations among younger students. However, there are also many ways to implement College Signing Day at your school separately from high school participation.

What does College Signing Day look like at an elementary school?

The event should be what works best for each individual school. For some schools, it could involve a visit to the feeder high school to watch the high school's assembly. You could also host high school seniors who previously attended your elementary school to parade through the halls in their caps and gowns. If your event is only incorporating elementary school students, you can host a college pep rally or celebratory lunch with college-themed activities.

When is College Signing Day?

Across the country, many schools are planning events on or around May 1 to celebrate college decisions. We encourage schools in Tennessee to plan your College Signing Day for one day in late April or early May. The exact date will depend on your particular school schedule.

What is the purpose of College Signing Day?

The purpose of College Signing Day is to grow excitement around going to college and model the college-going culture for younger students. Every student should have the opportunity to be publicly celebrated for going to college. The event can also be an inspiring opportunity for younger students. By applauding students who are going to college and gaining knowledge of where students are attending college, younger students will increase their own educational aspirations. Through adding participation of and partnership with higher education institutions, the event can also be a way to grow the relationship between local colleges, your school, and your students who will be attending those institutions.

Suggested Reading List

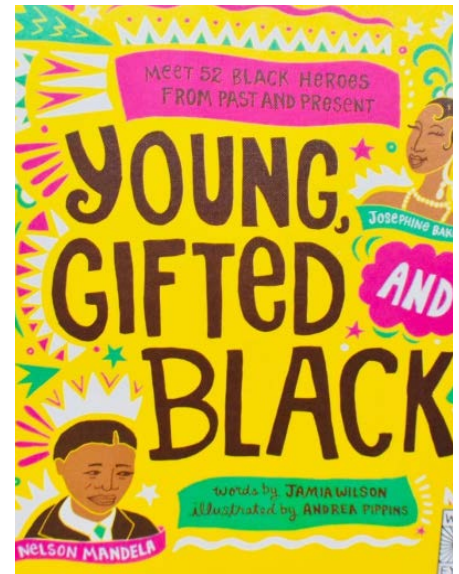


The Tennessee Higher Education Commission has curated a list of books that align with the event's goals and bring college, career, and financial literacy concepts to life for elementary school students. The books listed for College Signing Day are focused on brave people who faced obstacles but achieved a big goal. The following listings are from Amazon.com.

Young, Gifted, and Black

by Jamia Wilson

"Meet 52 icons of color from the past and present in this celebration of inspirational achievement—a collection of stories about changemakers to encourage, inspire and empower the next generation of changemakers. Written in the spirit of Nina Simone's song, "To Be Young, Gifted, and Black," this vibrant book is a perfect introduction to both historic and present-day icons and heroes. Meet figureheads, leaders and pioneers such as Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela and Rosa Parks, as well as cultural trailblazers and athletes like Stevie Wonder, Oprah Winfrey and Serena Williams. All children deserve to see themselves represented positively in the books they read. Highlighting the talent and contributions of black leaders and changemakers from around the world, readers of all backgrounds will be empowered to discover what they too can achieve."

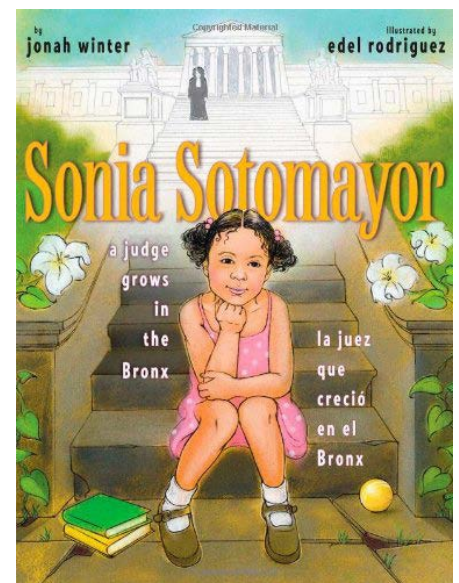


Sonia Sotomayor: A Judge Grows in the Bronx/ La Juez Que Crecio en el Bronx

by Jonah Winter (Spanish and English Edition)

"The inspiring and timely story of Sonia Sotomayor, who rose up from a childhood of poverty and prejudice to become the first Latino to be nominated to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Before Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor took her seat in our nation's highest court, she was just a little girl in the South Bronx. Justice Sotomayor didn't have a lot growing up, but she had what she needed -- her mother's love, a will to learn, and her own determination. With bravery she became the person she wanted to be. With hard work she succeeded. With little sunlight and only a modest plot from which to grow, Justice Sotomayor bloomed for the whole world to see."



College Mascot Matchup



Mascot Matchup- Ask students to match the mascots below with the Tennessee university they belong to.

Read through each school and mascot and draw a line to match Tennessee's public universities with their mascots!

Austin Peay State University

Clarksville, TN

East Tennessee State University

Johnson City, TN

Middle Tennessee State University

Murfreesboro, TN

Tennessee State University

Nashville, TN

Tennessee Tech University

Cookeville, TN

University of Memphis

Memphis, TN

University of Tennessee

Knoxville, TN

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Chattanooga, TN

University of Tennessee Martin

Martin, TN



College is for ME!

Ask students to use this page to color in their college mortarboard. Show examples of creative mortarboard designs that real college students have done. If you have a real mortarboard you can borrow from the high school or bring in from home, let students try it on!

.....



Example Mortarboards



Average Salary Activity



The Path to College Leads to...



Job Opportunities

By 2025, 55% of jobs in Tennessee will require a college certificate or degree.

A Higher Income

Activity template showing six diverse individuals (three women and three men) with thought bubbles for recording career information:

- Person 1 (Teal bubble):** Career _____, Degree: _____, \$ _____ /year
- Person 2 (Orange bubble):** Career _____, Degree: _____, \$ _____ /year
- Person 3 (Purple bubble):** Career _____, Degree: _____, \$ _____ /year
- Person 4 (Blue bubble):** Career _____, Degree: _____, \$ _____ /year
- Person 5 (Green bubble):** Career _____, Degree: _____, \$ _____ /year
- Person 6 (Light green bubble):** Career _____, Degree: _____, \$ _____ /year

ACTIVITY: Identify 5 interesting career paths and note the degree required and the annual salary.

There are countless other benefits of attending college, including:

Making
yourself proud

Accomplishing
a goal

Setting an example
for others

Meeting
new people

Collaborate with High Schools



College Walk

When possible, partner with feeder high schools to allow seniors to walk the halls of your elementary school on the way to their college signing day ceremony. Play music or have the band lead the way. Allow elementary school students to line the halls, make signs, and cheer for their classmates.

Congratulate Seniors

Assign each advisory period a group of seniors from a feeder high school to celebrate. Allow students to write letters of congratulation and encouragement to the graduating seniors celebrating their postsecondary plans. Students can decorate their cards or make signs to send to their adopted seniors.

Senior Breakfast or Lunch

Invite your former students back to your elementary school for breakfast or lunch to celebrate their graduation from high school, and allow your current elementary school students to participate. You can choose to arrange the seating by college and allow elementary school students interested in a college to sit with high school seniors who plan to attend that college. Coordinate with the schedules of the feeder high schools when picking a date for your event. You may choose to host this event on the same day as the high school's College Signing Day ceremony.



Elementary School Signing Ceremonies



Imitate high school signing events by allowing 5th grade students to sign a pledge to dedicate themselves to their studies, graduate from high school, and pursue a postsecondary credential. A sample pledge is provided on the next page. The signing ceremony could happen at a pep rally or could be a more formal event coinciding with elementary school graduation. Design an event that works best for your school!

Signing Ceremony Planning Checklist

- ❑ Set up a College Signing Day committee or team at your school to discuss the timeline and event. Your team might include school counselors, teachers, administrators, students, parents/guardians, college admissions/financial aid/outreach staff, and other community members or organizations.
- ❑ Evaluate current resources and budget. Once your budget is set, you will be able to better determine the type of event and what organizations and volunteers could provide or donate.
- ❑ Determine the type of event(s) and schedule for your College Signing Day based on resources and budget.
- ❑ Confirm College Signing Day location and time.
- ❑ Schedule time to meet with the 5th grade class to celebrate their achievements and share with them the purpose of their College Signing Day event and making a pledge to prepare for college.
- ❑ Contact higher education institutions, local businesses, and local non-profits or community organizations for donations and/or sponsorships for college tee shirts or other swag.
- ❑ Distribute resources to faculty and staff at your school and request that they promote the event by decorating their classroom and/or door with related information.
- ❑ Finalize arrangements for a pep rally and/or assembly, if applicable. Remind teachers, counselors, and administrators of the day's schedule and planned activities.
- ❑ Communicate with 5th graders regarding the logistics of your event. You may want to do a practice run with your students leading up to the event or right before the event.
- ❑ Utilize your schools call-out or texting system to remind students and parents of your event.
- ❑ Give every participating student one of the College Bound stickers that was included in your Path to College resource mailing.
- ❑ Confirm any additional personnel needed. Coordinate set up and clean up needs with custodial staff.
- ❑ Create a fun playlist or ask the school's pep band to play during the event.
- ❑ Purchase decorations and supplies for the event (i.e., balloons, streamers, pep rally appropriate noise makers).
- ❑ Ensure your event supplies are ready the day before College Signing Day.





Class of 2028

Name

Today, I look ahead to my high school career. I will work hard to do my best in all of my classes and understand that the work I do in my high school courses will help me prepare for high school, college, and my career.

I pledge to be a role model to younger students and to develop myself and my interests through academics, activities, and community service.

In 2028, I will graduate ready for college and ready to succeed as a proud alum of _____ Elementary School.



Design Your College Pennant



A college pennant project can be a fun way to work with your art teacher and your language arts teachers to spread college-going enthusiasm. We've created two worksheets that can be used in tandem to ensure students are creating a fun design while also building their college aspirations. Ask students to use the brainstorming document first, then move on to designing their pennant.

.....

Brainstorm Your Pennant



A popular way to show pride in your college is through a pennant. Pennants are flags in the shape of a triangle. They're often made of felt or soft, but stiff fabric. Colleges make pennants that represent their school by using the school's colors, including the school's name, and decorating the pennant with a motto or a mascot.

Imagine yourself in the year 2028...you're about to be a high school graduate! What are your plans? What are you most proud of from your high school career? Use these answers to inspire the design for your pennant!

Student First and Last Name: _____

Please Fill In Your Chosen Program: _____

Name of College You Will Attend: _____

OR

TCAT or Technical School You Will Attend: _____

OR

Military Service in Which You Will Enlist: _____

What accomplishment in high school are you most proud of?

What career will you pursue?

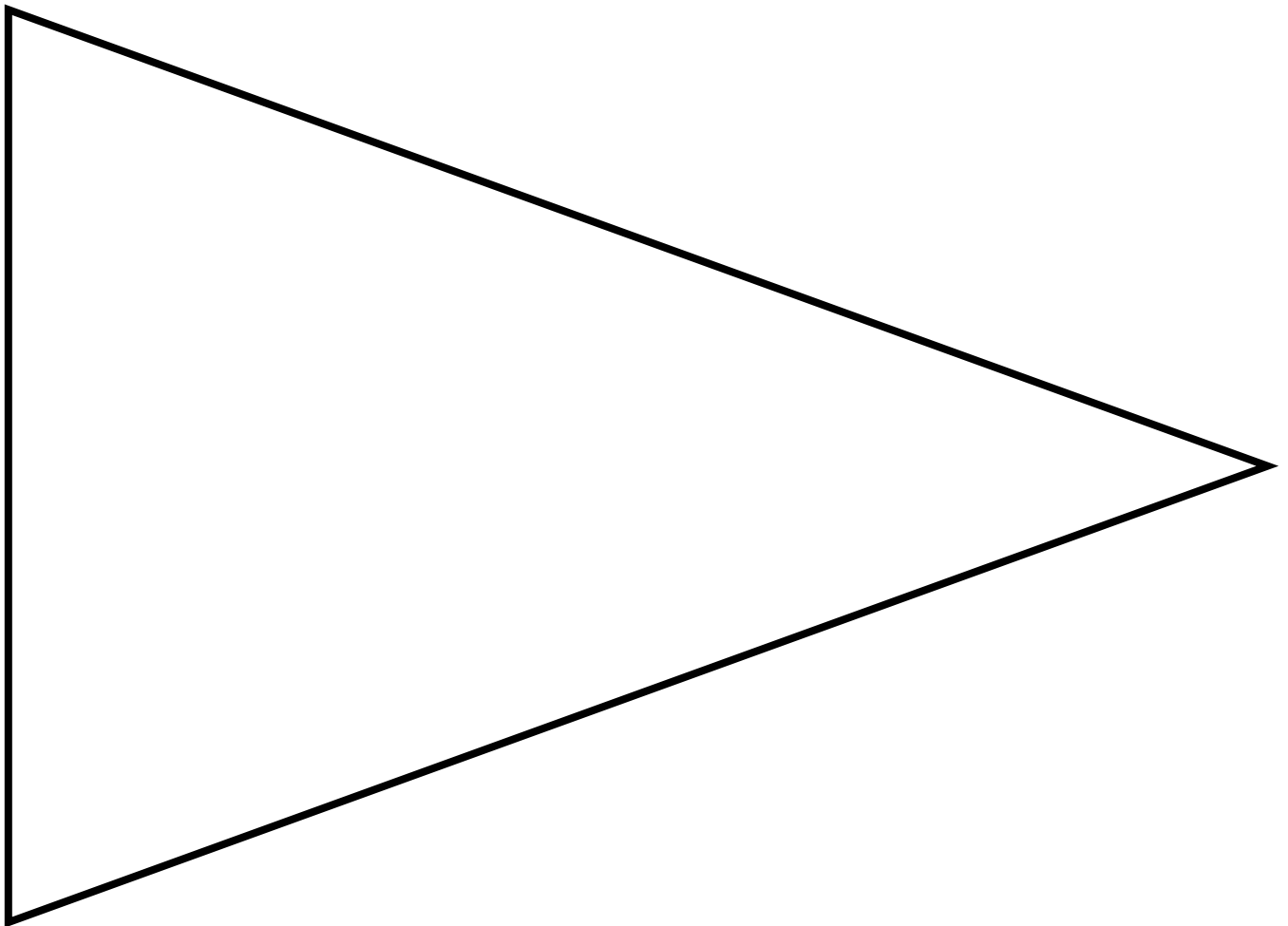


Design Your Pennant



Show your college and career spirit by designing a pennant (a small, triangular banner) to celebrate your future choices. Your pennant should include the following details:

- 1) Your name
- 2) Your college, military branch, or career training program's name (for example: Columbia State Community College, Middle Tennessee State University, United States Air Force)
- 3) Symbols representing activities or classes in which you'd like to enroll (for example: a football, a beaker if you're interested in chemistry, a newspaper for writing for the student newspaper).



..... S E C T I O N 3

Volunteer Engagement and Path to College

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Included in this section:

- » An Introduction to Volunteer Engagement
- » Volunteer 101: Recruit Them
- » Sample Volunteer Recruitment Email or Letter
- » Higher Education Contacts
- » Volunteer 101: Train Them
- » Volunteer 101: Thank Them

An Introduction to Volunteer Engagement

Why should I consider recruiting volunteers for my Path to College events?

Volunteers can provide several benefits to your Path to College events. On a practical note, volunteers help you accomplish more on a day with many moving pieces. Volunteers can ensure that students sign- in to your event, that students and families are directed to the correct locations, and more.

In addition to manpower, volunteer involvement provides your students and families with a sense of community support that is a key ingredient to a thriving college-going culture. When students see a volunteer from a local business or higher education institution who is taking time from their day to help with a Path to College event, it sends a message that the community cares about student success.

When it comes to sustainability and the college access work that you do, volunteers can open the door to strong partnerships in your local community. Volunteers who spend time in your school will spread the word about the great work you're doing, which can lead to anything from donations for a school barbecue, to a job shadowing partnership or a mentoring program.

You will have the opportunity to steward great relationships with your community through volunteers.

Volunteers sound great but I don't know where to start. What can I do to ensure I have volunteers and that they leave my event wanting to get more involved with my school?

In the following pages, we will detail the three keys to a great volunteer experience:

- Recruit Them
- Train Them
- Thank Them

Volunteer 101: Recruit Them



Where can I find volunteers?

Potential volunteers are all around you, if you know where to look. Here are just a few examples of groups and organizations to contact for volunteers:

- School alumni
- Students' families, PTA, School Improvement Council
- Retired educators
- Senior centers, or church groups
- Community college and university representatives and faculty
- Business, community, and political leaders
- Youth programs (e.g., YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, 4H, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts)
- College access organizations in your school or community

How can I advertise the opportunity to volunteers?

Start with your network in your community. Who do you know at your local businesses, places of worship, and nonprofit organizations who may want to get involved? Reach out to your contacts and see if they are willing to send out an email or post a message in their bulletin or break room on your behalf.

What should I write in order to explain the opportunity and what volunteers will be doing when they come to our school?

On the following pages, you will see a sample volunteer email or letter that includes blank spaces for customization. We have included sample event descriptions and topics covered, which you can use to personalize your own letter based on your event and needs.

Sample Volunteer Recruitment Email or Letter



[School logo]

[School address]

Dear [name of organization]

[Name of your elementary school] is hosting a [event name] Path to College event on [date]. Path to College events help students and families learn more about future careers and college opportunities.

During this event, [event description].

We will be hosting our event on [date] and would welcome representatives from [name of organization] to visit our school during this exciting and important time. Volunteers can [sample volunteer activities]. Our students will look to you for help and support as they take a big step in the direction of going to college.

If you or any of your colleagues at [name of organization] are interested in volunteering in any capacity, please contact [name, contact info at name of your elementary school].

Thank you,

[Your name]

[Your title]

Sample Volunteer Recruitment Event Descriptions

Event Name: College Application and Exploration Week

Event Description: ...students and families will have the opportunity to explore college and career paths. At our school, we define college as a form of training beyond high school that affords a student the opportunity to earn a living wage and develop into a thriving member of our community.

Event Name: TN FASFA Frenzy

Event Description: ...students and parents will learn about financial literacy, saving for college, and how education and training can open up new career paths. In high school, these students will fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) in order to remain eligible for scholarship and grant programs like Tennessee Promise. In elementary school, TN FAFSA Frenzy events help students gain awareness of earning, saving, spending, and how these concepts work with career choices and education.

Event Name: Career Fair (College and Career Planning)

Event Description: ...students and families will have the opportunity to explore a variety of careers. Our elementary school students are beginning to set goals for the careers and college experiences that they would like to pursue, and we want to encourage students to learn about the different fields and roles that exist in our community.

*Additional information you may want to incorporate: Each presenter will be provided a table where you can display your career, business, or organization. If possible, please bring prizes, pamphlets, or brochures for students and come prepared to share about your education, what you love about your role, and what kinds of skills you use at your career.

Event Name: College Signing Day

Event Description: ...elementary school students will have the opportunity to celebrate college-bound seniors at our feeder high school. By recognizing these older students, our younger students will continue to develop college and career aspirations. At our school, we define college as any form of training beyond high school that affords a student the opportunity to earn a living wage and develop into a thriving member of our community.

Volunteer Recruitment: Higher Education Contacts

Contact Information for Tennessee's Public Universities

Austin Peay State University
Clarksville, TN
www.apsu.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@apsu.edu
(931) 221-7661

Tennessee State University
Nashville, TN
www.tnstate.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@tnstate.edu
(615) 963-5101

University of Tennessee-Knoxville
Knoxville, TN
www.utk.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@utk.edu
(865) 974-1111

East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, TN
www.etsu.edu
Admissions Office:
go2etsu@etsu.edu.
(423) 439-4213

Tennessee Tech University
Cookeville, TN
www.tntech.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@tntech.edu
(931) 372-3888

University of Tennessee-Chattanooga
Chattanooga, TN
www.utc.edu
Admissions Office:
utcmocs@utc.edu
(423) 425-4662

Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, TN
www.mtsu.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@mtsu.edu
(615) 898-2233

University of Memphis
Memphis, TN
www.memphis.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@memphis.edu
(901) 678-2111

University of Tennessee-Martin
Martin, TN
www.utm.edu
Admissions Office:
admitme@utm.edu
(731) 881-7020

Contact Information for Tennessee's Community Colleges

Chattanooga State Community College
Chattanooga, TN
www.chattanoogastate.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@chattanoogastate.edu
(423) 697-4400

Dyersburg State Community College
Dyersburg, TN
www.dscc.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@dscc.edu
(731) 286-3200

Nashville State Community College
Nashville, TN
www.nscc.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@nscc.edu
(615) 353-3333

Cleveland State Community College
Cleveland, TN
www.clevelandstatecc.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@clevelandstatecc.edu
(423) 472-7141

Jackson State Community College
Jackson, TN
www.jscc.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@jscc.edu
(731) 424-3520

Northeast State Community College
Blountville, TN
www.northeaststate.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@northeaststate.edu
(423) 323-3191

Columbia State Community College
Columbia, TN
www.columbiastate.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@columbiastate.edu
(931) 540-2790

Motlow State Community College
Tullahoma, TN
www.mscc.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@mscc.edu
(931) 393-1500

Pellissippi State Community College
Knoxville, TN
www.pstcc.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@pstcc.edu
(865) 694-6400

Volunteer Recruitment: Higher Education Contacts

Contact Information for Tennessee's Community Colleges- Continued

Roane State Community College
Harriman, TN
www.roanestate.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@roanestate.edu
(865) 354-3000

Volunteer State Community College
Gallatin, TN
www.volstate.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@volstate.edu
(615) 230-3688

Southwest Tenn. Community College
Memphis, TN
www.southwest.tn.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@southwest.tn.edu
(901) 333-7822

Walters State Community College
Morristown, TN
www.ws.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@ws.edu
(423) 585-2600

Contact Information for Tennessee's Colleges of Applied Technology

TCAT - Athens
www.tcatathens.edu
admissions@tcatathens.edu
(423) 744-2814

TCAT - Dickson
www.tcatdickson.edu
admissions@tcatdickson.edu
(615) 441-6220

TCAT - Jacksboro
www.tcatjacksboro.edu
admissions@tcatjacksboro.edu
(423) 566-9629

TCAT - Chattanooga
www.chattanooga.state.edu/tcat
admissions@chattanooga.state.edu
(423) 697-4433

TCAT - Elizabethton
www.tcatelizabethton.edu
admissions@tcatelizabethton.edu
(423) 543-0070

TCAT - Jackson
www.tcatjackson.edu
admissions@tcatjackson.edu
(731) 424-0691

TCAT - Covington
www.tcatcovington.edu
admissions@tcatcovington.edu
(901) 475-2526

TCAT - Harriman
www.tcatharriman.edu
admissions@tcatharriman.edu
(865) 882-6703

TCAT - Knoxville
www.tcatknoxville.edu
admissions@tcatknoxville.edu
(865) 546-5567

TCAT - Crossville
www.tcatcrossville.edu
admissions@tcatcrossville.edu
(931) 484-7502

TCAT - Hartsville
www.tcathartsville.edu
admissions@tcathartsville.edu
(615) 374-2147

TCAT - Livingston
www.tcatlivingston.edu
admissions@tcatlivingston.edu
(931) 823-5525

TCAT - Crump
www.tcatcrump.edu
admissions@tcatcrump.edu
(731) 632-3393

TCAT - Hohenwald
www.tcathohenwald.edu
admissions@tcathohenwald.edu
(931) 796-5351 x122

TCAT - McKenzie
www.tcatmckenzie.edu
admissions@tcatmckenzie.edu
(731) 352-5364

Volunteer Recruitment: Higher Education Contacts

Contact Information for Tennessee's Colleges of Applied Technology- Continued

TCAT - McMinnville
www.tcatmcminnville.edu
admissions@tcatmcminnville.edu
(931) 473-5587

TCAT - Nashville
www.tcatnashville.edu
admissions@tcatnashville.edu
(615) 425-5500

TCAT - Pulaski
www.tcatpulaski.edu
admissions@tcatpulaski.edu
(931) 424-4014

TCAT - Memphis
www.tcatmemphis.edu
admissions@tcatmemphis.edu
(901) 543-6169

TCAT - Newbern
www.tcatnewbern.edu
admissions@tcatnewbern.edu
(731) 627-2511

TCAT - Ripley
www.tcatripley.edu
admissions@tcatripley.edu
(731) 635-3368

TCAT - Morristown
www.tcatmorristown.edu
admissions@tcatmorristown.edu
(423) 586-5771

TCAT - Oneida
www.tcatoneida.edu
admissions@tcatoneida.edu
(423) 663-4900

TCAT - Shelbyville
www.tcatshelbyville.edu
admissions@tcatshelbyville.edu
(931) 685-5013 x100

TCAT - Murfreesboro
www.tcatmurfreesboro.edu
admissions@tcatmurfreesboro.edu
(615) 898-8010 x132

TCAT - Paris
www.tcatparis.edu
admissions@tcatparis.edu
(731) 644-7365 x151

TCAT - Whiteville
www.tcatwhiteville.edu
admissions@tcatwhiteville.edu
(731) 254-8521

Volunteer 101: Train Them



Volunteer training can take on a number of different forms based on your event, your team, and your time. If the words “volunteer training” sound intimidating, think again and think outside the box! On the following pages, we have included training materials for each event. But first, consider how you’d like to train the volunteers you’ve recruited.

In-Person

Meeting with volunteers in person is a great way to develop relationships with the individuals who are giving their time and energy to college access work in the community. You can host an in-person training at your school and include a tour of the facilities to familiarize your volunteers with your location. This option is great if you have volunteers from a wide variety of organizations, but can be difficult for volunteers to attend due to commitments outside of work hours.

If many of your volunteers are from the same organization, consider hosting a training during their lunch break or before or after a group meeting. While you won’t be able to provide a tour of the school, you will likely have better attendance.

Webinar

Webinars are great for busy schedules! You can host the webinar live at a time that works well for you, and record the webinar so that you can share the recording with those who aren’t able to make it. Free webinar software that has worked well for Path to College participants includes Zoom, OpenMeetings, and MeetingBurner.

Why You Need Volunteer Training

Adapted from
www.thebalance.com

Among the things that make volunteers happy are a good orientation to your organization and basic training.

Just getting the volunteer in the door is not enough. Just like any employee, a volunteer needs to feel welcomed, informed and trained for whatever might happen.

Orientation is just like it sounds. Volunteers want to know the context in which they will be doing their work.

What a General Orientation Should Cover

Share your school’s mission and history.

Describe Path to College events and your college access work.

Include parking and logistical information.

Describe any policies your school has around signing in and signing out, social media, etc.

Volunteer 101: Thank Them



Never underestimate the power of a thank you. Saying thank you with a short, but meaningful note shows your volunteers that you appreciate the work they did to support your students and parents. It can also help you build stronger relationships with members of the community. Happy volunteers who feel valued will be more likely to sign up for future opportunities and may become some of your best advocates in sharing the great work that's happening at your school.

Here is a sample thank you note that you can personalize as you like. Try to send thank you notes (emails or letters) within 48 hours of your event.

.....

[School Logo/Name]

[School Address]



[Date]

Dear **Contact's Name or Institution**,

On behalf of **Name of Elementary School** I would like to personally thank you for volunteering your time at our **<event name>** event. This event would not have been a success without partners like you.

Include a short summary of what happened at the event. (i.e. 40 parents and students attended and were able to attend and receive information about creating a 529 college savings plan). Our students are one step closer to actualizing their dreams of attending college!

Once again **Name of Elementary School** thanks you for your efforts and contribution of time at our event! We hope to see you soon.

Insert a link to any press coverage or photographs from the event.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

[Contact Information]

S E C T I O N 4

Media Outreach and Social Media

Included in this section:

- » Media Outreach
- » Sample Press Release
- » Sample Media Advisory
- » Photograph Submission/Media Release
- » Google Alerts

Media Outreach and College Access



Reaching out to local media is a wonderful way to increase community awareness of and involvement in college access work. Path to College events are a positive reflection of work happening in your community and inviting the media will shine a spotlight on the work you're doing through the program.

Steps for Reaching out to the Media

1. Write a press release or media advisory: Write a brief press release or media advisory for your event or news. **Typically, a press release is used for a news story where there isn't a specific event for the media to attend (but many people also use press releases for events).**

In each press release or media advisory, be sure to include contact information, including a name, telephone number, and email address, for your designated media contact. In the body of the press release, make sure you cover the basic: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

A media advisory should be used for a specific event, such as a kickoff. The media advisory will highlight the date, time, and location of the event, as well as providing some background information.

2. Distribute the press release: When you are ready to announce your news event, send out the press release or advisory to the local media approximately **two weeks prior to the event.**

If you email a copy of the press release or advisory, include the text in the body of your email rather than as an attachment. This will help your email avoid spam filters. If you can, send the email from an address linked to a person's name (rather than a general organizational mailbox). An email from `firstname.lastname@tn.gov` is more likely to be read than an email from `CollegeforTN@tn.gov`.

Tip: If you or someone at your school has a relationship with the media or a specific reporter, have that person reach out and/or follow up. Also try reaching out to reporters who have covered your school(s) previously.

3. Follow up once you send the advisory: Once you have sent the press release or advisory, follow up by phone to make sure the newsroom received the advisory. Prepare to be brief on the phone- newsrooms and reporters are usually busy and being prepared when you speak to them will help you keep their attention.
4. Designate a media point of contact: Choose someone to be the point person for any members of the media who may want more information about the news release or event.
5. The day of your news release or event: Ensure that your media point of contact is prepared to answer basic questions about your event. Make sure parking is available for any media and that your school's front office is aware that media may be arriving.
6. Send a thank you: Saying thanks will help to maintain a good relationship with your local media outlets.

Sample Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, please contact:

Name

Phone

E-mail Address

Include a city/state and the date of the release.

Your headline should reflect the content and be in capital letters or in bold.

SCHOOL NAME HOSTS EVENT NAME

CITY, TN (DATE) - In an effort to promote college awareness and access, **Name of Your Elementary School** will participate in **Event Name**, a statewide initiative sponsored by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and CollegeforTN.org, on **Date**.

The goal of **Event Name** is to provide all Tennessee seniors the opportunity to learn about college and career opportunities. **Insert one to two sentences to describe your event.** This is the **Insert Number** time it has been held at **Name of Your Elementary school**.

Name of Your Elementary School, is expecting more than **Insert Number** students to participate with the help of **Insert Number** volunteers from **Insert names of School Faculty/Administration/College/ Community Resources** that will help. "Quote about your event. The event is a unique opportunity to create a college-going culture in **Name of Your County/City/or District**," said **Principal**.

For more information about the **Name of Your Elementary school Event Name**, please contact **Your Name and Contact Information**.

Event Name is a statewide event organized by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and sponsored by CollegeforTN.org, Tennessee's college and career planning web portal. The goal of **Event Name** is **Event Goal**.

- The body of the release should address the who, what, where, when, why, and how of the event. Try to include at least one quote from someone who plays a leadership role (for example, your principal).
- The release should total between 4 and 7 paragraphs.

###

This mark lets readers know that this is the end of the press release.

At the end of each press release, it is a good idea to include "boilerplate language" or a standard description of your school and school district.



Sample Media Advisory



Include notice that the document is a media advisory, the title of the event, and the date of the event.

MEDIA ADVISORY FOR:
Name of Your Elementary School Event Name
Date of event

For more information contact:
Name, phone number, email address

Always include main point of contact.

Give a brief summary in the title of the media advisory.

Name of Your Elementary School/District Name Event Description

In an effort to promote college awareness and access, **Name of Your Elementary School** will participate in **Event Name**, a statewide initiative sponsored by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and CollegeforTN.org, on **Date**.

Include just 1-3 sentences to give context to your event.

The goal of **Event Name** is to provide all Tennessee students the opportunity to explore college and career opportunities with the support of their school. **Insert one to two sentences to describe your event.** This is the **Insert Number** time it has been held at **Name of Your Elementary School**.

[Include details about your specific event, especially activities that can be filmed or photographed. "Students will be visiting employer booths at the career fair to talk with local professionals."

WHO: For example: 75 5th graders
WHAT: Event Description
WHERE: Location
WHEN: Date

Using bullet points or a list, include the Who, What, Where, and When of the event.

Event Name is a statewide event organized by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and sponsored by CollegeforTN.org, Tennessee's college and career planning web portal. The goal of **Event Name** is **Event Goal**.

###

At the end of each media advisory, include "boilerplate language" or a standard description of your school and school district.

This mark lets readers know that this is the end of the media advisory.

Photograph Submission



Not every event needs its own press release or media advisory. If you are having a smaller workshop or having a representative from a college or a business come to your school, you may want to skip the press release and instead submit a photograph to your local paper after the event. The following information has been adapted from www.pixalo.com.

"Editors receive many photos every day and very few ever get published. You can save them and yourself some time by following these simple tips.

...Send high quality .jpgs of around 2mb at 300dpi. Don't send more than 2-3 images in one e-mail attachment. And remember to include keywords, etc. in the file info. In the body of the e-mail put a very brief description of the subject of the photos. Be very judgmental of your own work and only send the best images with different views, i.e. scene setting shot, close up, human interaction.

...The speed of turnaround here is paramount. Newspapers go to print at a certain time and it doesn't matter how good your photos are, if they are too late they will not get used."

A note on photos and students: please verify with your school and school district what kind of parental authorization you need in order to photograph students and release those photographs on social media or in the media. If you have any doubts about whether a student and family has signed a release, err on the side of caution and do not submit that photograph.

Sample Media Release



I hereby give irrevocable permission for photographs and/or videos of my child, _____, to be used by his/her school or the Tennessee Higher Education Commission/Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation now and in the future.

I further authorize his/her school or the Tennessee Higher Education Commission or Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation to use my child's likeness, name, and personal information (limited to age, school and city of residence) in publications and reproductions (including the program's official website) as well as for editorial, trade, and advertising purposes. I understand that I will not receive any fee, now or in the future, for the use of my child's likeness.

Parent/guardian signature and date _____

Printed parent name _____



Creating Google Alerts

If you send out a press release or media advisory, you'll want to know when something about your event gets published. Google alerts are an easy and convenient way to ensure you see when your school is featured in the news. These directions have been adapted from the Google Help Forum.

Create an Alert

1. Sign in to your Google account.
2. Type in the website **<https://www.google.com/alerts>**.
3. In the box at the top, enter the words you would like Google to alert you of when news appears. We suggest you use quotation marks for your search terms, i.e. **"TN FAFSA Frenzy."**
4. Click **Show Options** to update the following: how often you'd like to be notified, the types of sites you'll see, how many results you want, and which other Google accounts should receive the alert.
5. Click **Create Alert**. You will now get emails whenever Google finds matching search results.

We suggest that you create multiple alerts to ensure you're capturing as many mentions of your school's college access work as possible.

- "Alton Elementary School"
- "AES"
- "AES Career Fair"

..... S E C T I O N 5

Path to College and Virtual Learning

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Included in this section:

- » Virtual and Socially Distant Implementation
- » College Application and Exploration Week
- » TN FAFSA Frenzy
- » College Planning Night
- » College Signing Day
- » Useful Links and Documents

Virtual and Socially Distant Implementation

Many school leaders, students, educators, and families are wondering what school and college will look like during the COVID-19 pandemic. Path to College resources are great ways to engage your students both in person and virtually. There is no substitute for personal relationships and connections, but virtual advising is something most of you have already been doing for years!

At [THEC-TSAC](#), we are committed to supplementing your efforts with great, student-tested ideas around enhancing a college and career culture within your schools. These resources are not all of the resources to help you implement great instruction and advising with your students in 2020, but these digital and virtual ideas can help you begin to provide some stability and consolation to your students and families in these uncertain times.

We know this is a difficult time for your school and your students. In recognition of the “let’s make it happen” spirit of college advisors and counselors everywhere, [THEC/TSAC](#) has put together resources gathered from GEAR UP TN, Advise TN, and other schools who are making plans to advise every student, no matter the circumstances.

College Application and Exploration Week

College Application and Exploration Week in the 2020-2021 academic school year is set to begin on September 21 and conclude Friday September 25, 2020. We encourage schools to find some time during the fall semester or quarter to help all PK-12 students and families begin thinking about the connection between college enrollment and a great future job and career.

Our concern when our schools are virtual is that students won't bother to apply to college, or remember the steps for completing an application. Using virtual advising strategies, students can learn that August-October is the best time to apply to several colleges. Reminder, college is any training beyond high school graduation, so that includes our Technical Colleges of Applied Technology, Community Colleges, and Universities.

Here are some best practices and ideas for #TNCollegeAPPWeek:

1. Build excitement for your school community around the connection between college and a great job.
 - a. Celebrate #TNCollegeAPPWeek events with a [newsletter](#) so parents and the larger community know what is happening.
 - b. Leverage social media to schedule posts each day that mirror the daily college announcements, trivia questions, or highlight the school faculty.
 - c. Snail mail or deliver Path to College stickers to the students who have successfully sent an application, completed an online survey, or completed a milestone. Use the Tennessee Department of Education's [College and Career Milestones](#) to help your 5-12th graders.
 - d. Promote your schools via print, radio, or other media. Local papers are always looking for a great education story. Make sure that they have your positive stories to share.
2. College-Fact or Fiction? Many of our students and families see the sticker price of a college and immediately are discouraged. Dispel myths from truth by making it a game.
 - a. Send out a survey to students and parents online. Encourage parents and students to answer the questions and be entered to win a Wal-Mart gift card, or other incentive.
 - ii. "Is community college tuition-free in Tennessee?" TRUE!
 - iii. "Standardized test scores and grade point averages are the only basis upon which the merit of a student is judged when making admission decisions." FALSE!
 - b. Create free online quiz games with [Kahoot!](#), [PollAnywhere](#), and [Google Forms](#).
3. [Virtual Advising](#) is a great way to approximate in-person counseling and advising for students. Think tele-health appointments during the lockdowns, or video conference calls with your coworkers.
 - a. Find the right tool for your schools and community. Many families, students, and teachers enjoy using [SignalVine](#) , [Possip](#) and [Remind](#).



College Application and Exploration Week- Continued

- b. Persistent outreach will help, even though our students might not immediately respond or confirm that they are receiving our Remind nudges, or [SignalVine](#) texts. Open-ended texts or messages will more likely yield a response from students.
 - i. "Hi [first_name], it's Marje. We're about a month into the school year so I wanted to check in and see how you're doing. Anything I can help with?"
 - ii. "Hi, it's Deanne. Lots of students get grants that help them finish their degree and graduate to a rewarding career. Can I help you apply to [name of college] this year?"
 - iii. Hi [first_name], I want you to have lots of choices for college and career! I notice that you haven't completed the TN Promise application yet. Is there anything I can help with?"
 - iv. "Happy #TNCollegeAPPWeek, [first name]! Are you still interested in [college name]? Let me know how I can help you apply."
- c. Personalize [messages](#) and outreach. Make sure to use your name when messaging with students.
- d. Establish a generic email for students so that that all counseling staff can access for example: Counseling@yourhighschool.edu
 - i. You can create a shared email address with your district admin, or create a free Gmail account and share the password/account details with your counseling and advising teammates.
- e. Develop a FAQ on your school counseling website, based on the students' biggest obstacles to applying for colleges.
 - i. Update the FAQ to reflect your students' top college interests.
 - ii. Find the human, or college admissions officer who knows your school and would be best at helping your students and list their names and contact information on the school website's counseling pages.
- f. Modify your school's answering machine in order to forward calls about high school transcripts, college applications, or other senior tasks. Create a virtual voicemail box using MS Outlook, or create a new inbox with your phone systems so that the entire school counseling staff can access these resources.
- g. Use mail merge with family and student emails to highlight students' personal interests, first name, and upcoming deadlines.
 - i. For example, if you have an excel spreadsheet with students' interests in careers and colleges, nudge the students with a personalized message, hyperlink to that future college website, and link them to a YouTube video with an exciting future career the students have shared with you.

College Application and Exploration Week- Continued

- ii. If you haven't [polled](#) your students' college and career interests, create an online poll to send out to your students and/or families. When you know your students' interests, then you can monitor their specific milestones during the summer months to mitigate summer melt.
- h. Use video conference calls with college admissions officers, community alumni, and local leaders to allow students to see a member of the local community who believes college is the best path to a great job.
 - i. Video conference call with the admissions representatives to provide a virtual tour of the college campus and even attend a college class.
 - ii. Video conference call with a local employer to identify the different kinds of jobs and the training required to complete these jobs (assembly manager, restaurant manager, high school principal).
 - iii. Reach out to your TSAC Outreach Coordinators to help schedule a training or virtual Q&A with your students.
 - iv. Many colleges have virtual tours available.
 - 1. [Strive Virtual College Fairs](#)
 - 2. [CampusTours](#)
 - 3. [YouVisit](#)
 - 4. Historically Black Colleges and Universities [Virtual College Tours](#)
 - 5. [YouUniversity](#)
- i. Host webinars for your parents, since schools most likely will be discouraging in-person assemblies for most of the fall semester.
 - i. Use the Path to College slide deck to help parents navigate the application and financial aid process.
 - ii. Present your PowerPoint slides and share with YouTube or email.

TN FAFSA Frenzy

Tennessee continues to lead the nation in completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms. However, in a virtual landscape we have seen fewer students complete and re-submit each school year. How can we support our educators and families who need real-time help with the FAFSA?

Here are some best practices:

1. Encourage students and parents to begin the process of talking about paying for college. Counselors should provide context and a calming influence over students and parents in a webinar or phone call-out to make certain that parents know they can reach out via email or phone during working hours.
 - a. Request your high school students complete a financial aid planning worksheet, like the FAFSA [college financial aid planner](#) document.
 - b. Send weekly reminders to high school seniors about upcoming deadlines. Remember, if your high school seniors have signed up for TN Promise, they will begin receiving reminders from TN Achieves and Ayers Foundation.
2. Investigate the college “return on investment” by teaching students key success metrics for colleges, using the [Federal College Scorecard](#).
 - a. Graduation Rate- How many students earn a degree or credential? (Graduation rates on the Federal College Scorecard measure students who graduated in 8 years for 4-year degrees, 4 years for 2-year degrees, 18 months for 9-month certificates.)
 - b. Salaries- after completing your degree, diploma, or certificate show the average amount of money graduates earn one year after graduation. These numbers are self-reported by the institutions to the Federal Government.
 - c. Retention rates- How many students return for another semester at that same school?
 - d. Assign students to research the nearest colleges and institutions in order to explore why and how these data metrics might impact their choice or future success.
3. Advise students to create options and alternative paths to the same career or job in the future by using [TNTransferPathway.org](#).
 - a. Select one of the high-demand career fields on TNTransferPathway.org
 - b. Investigate the locations where you can get started (community colleges).
 - c. Have students email you three possible pathways to pursuing certain careers of the teacher or students’ selections.
 - d. Communicate with parents about the students’ understanding of multiple pathways to success, using the students’ results.
4. Host a Virtual FAFSA Night.

TN FAFSA Frenzy- Continued

- a. Host a Virtual FAFSA night using Zoom, where teachers and counselors can monitor the chat box while providing students a place to ask questions and hear from you.
 - i. Have students complete a registration form, asking students to answer simple questions about their FSA ID, tax documents, or 2019 tax forms, or other questions.
 - ii. Reply to students with specific registration details for the password-protected Zoom call.
- b. Facebook Live affords parents/ students a place to watch a professional complete the FAFSA and to ask questions.
 - i. Remember that parents will be anxious about sharing financial information over the internet or phone, so understand that parents will need some clear instruction on what items are needed to complete the FAFSA.
 - ii. Encourage several advisors and counselors to join at the same time, so you can connect with students who might be having particular challenges.
- c. Schedule good, old-fashioned phone calls with students and families!
 - i. Remember the telephone? Find an online appointment calendar ([Doodle poll](#), Google Calendar, Calendly) and schedule a time for students to have your undivided attention.
 - ii. Connect within the week to make sure that your students have completed the FAFSA and know how to update their college preferences via e*GRandS.
- d. Research financial aid officers' contact numbers and email addresses.
 - i. If most of your students are enrolling at Jackson State Community College, then find those students and set up a virtual Financial Aid Zoom or Skype call.
 - ii. Allow students to see the advisors through the video conferencing call and then reconnect these students who have further questions.
- e. Paying for College requires a lot of planning. Including your sophomore and junior parents in your senior newsletter could help parents get a head start.

College Planning Night

College Planning Night is a time for rising seniors and underclassmen to ask questions and hear about the numerous pathways and options beyond high school graduation. Typically, a Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC) Outreach Coordinator comes to high schools in the spring semester to deliver a PowerPoint presentation and be present to students and parents afterwards. In a virtual landscape, TSAC Outreach Coordinators may not be able to make it out for your evening, or Back to School nights. However, these TSAC Outreach Coordinators still want to host virtual webinars and events. Stay tuned for upcoming webinars and recorded trainings, via @TNPromise and @TNHigherEd.

Here are some great ways to help parents and students begin thinking about college before senior year:

1. Mail your sophomores and juniors a physical postcard with important information, hyperlinks, and contact details.
 - a. Create a student-friendly newsletter with [Canva](#), [Adobe Spark](#), or MS Publisher.
 - b. Print out and mail double-sided postcards to students.
 - c. Ask your Chamber of Commerce, local churches, or community organizations to help cover the costs of sending out materials to the entire sophomore and junior class.
 - d. Measure your impact. Did students read the materials? Include a survey, link, trivia question, or raffle item to encourage students to read the information and respond.
2. Online Survey form!
 - a. Ask parents and students their hopes and dreams for planning for college, i.e. "Where do you see your son/daughter in 5 years?" "Which colleges might you want to know more about?"
 - b. Using survey results and students' permissions, sign up students to receive admissions information from the colleges themselves.
3. Virtual nudges about college scholarships can help students see that there is no such thing as a free lunch!
 - a. [Raise.me](#) shows students that even the grades you earn in high school are an investment in your future.
 - b. [CollegeGreenlight](#)- First in the family to attend college? Find resources and community support at this online resource page.
 - c. [QuestBridge](#) Scholarship Program-Free college? Yes, please. Only the most competitive applicants qualify for these public and private elite 4-year institutions. What have you got to lose?
4. Don't forget the value of community colleges and technical colleges.

College Planning Night- Continued

- a. Remember that every time you say the word college, our students and families imagine a dormitory, manicured lawns, and elitist cultures.
- b. Remind families that barbers, diesel mechanics, and electrical line workers all must go to college in order to get licensed and receive proper training.
- c. Show students the unique, accelerated programs through Tennessee's community colleges and technical colleges.
- d. CollegeBoard-RoadTrip Nation has incredible 50 minute long videos about [careers](#) that do not require 4 year degrees.

College Signing Day

Virtual College Signing Day Ideas

1. Use the hashtag #TNCollegeSigningDay. Use #TNCollegeSigningDay when posting on social media to recognize your students' post-high school plans. Also, consider tagging the college, military branch, or university to which your students are committing.
2. Create a highlight video of your seniors. Create a video highlighting your students using the [Virtual College Signing Day Video](#) PowerPoint template. The template, which includes music and instructions on how to create a video, is available here.
3. Host a school-wide social media spirit week. Ask students to post selfies each day. Make the last day College Signing Day and encourage seniors to post a photo of themselves holding a sign or wearing gear that declares their plans after high school.
4. Host a virtual Signing Day on Zoom or Google Meet. Email the [College Signing Day certificate](#) to students and invite students and their families to join a virtual call to announce their plans just as they would during a more traditional College Signing Day.
5. Ask students to post videos revealing their college plans. Ask students to post videos opening their college acceptance emails and/or envelopes. You can also have students send you their videos so that you or your school can make a video montage and post on social media.
6. Partner with radio and television. Partner with local radio stations to highlight students and their future commitments. Inquire with your local TV News stations about airing photos, videos, and school counselor interviews.
7. Engage your alumni. Post photos on social media of alums in college gear or throwback photos from their days on campus. Describe your fondest college memories in social media posts, showing school spirit, and reminding new students that making the commitment to higher education is worth it. Invite students to share their plans and officially congratulate all students who commit to attend by reposting their photos, too.

College Signing Day- Continued

Socially Distant College Signing Day Ideas

1. Send students a graduation box. Mail or deliver graduation tassels, caps, and gowns to each student's home address and ask that they record and share the "unboxing" of their graduation materials via social media.
2. Give students yard signs declaring their postsecondary intentions. Use yard signs to celebrate graduates in the front lawns of their homes and apartment complexes.
3. Bring [College Signing Day certificates](#) to your students' homes. Principals can take College Signing Day certificates to students' homes and (from an appropriate distance) record students as they show their certificate. These clips could then be compiled to create a video that the school can share with the larger community and via social media.
4. Window, door, or lawn decorations. Encourage students to declare their intentions and hang them so they're visible to the community. Set a deadline for doing this. Tell your community so they can search for students' plans on their daily neighborhood walk.
5. Schedule a car parade. Decorate cars with college gear and drive through your community to show off your students' plans.

Postsecondary Transition Toolkit

The Tennessee Department of Education's Division of College, Career & Technical Education, have developed a robust and helpful toolkit to help high schools specifically keep track of measurable outcomes and best practices for all students.

The purpose of the Postsecondary Transition Toolkit is to assist districts and schools in planning, executing, and monitoring key actions and metrics to ensure students stay on track for postsecondary success during this extraordinary time.

For more information about the [toolkit](#), please contact the Director, Jerre Maynor at Jerre.Maynor@tn.gov



Useful Links or Documents

Advising/Counseling Resources

- [ACT Resources for Students, Teachers, Schools and Workers Impacted by COVID-19](#)
 - [ACT Testing Updates](#)
 - Press Release: [ACT to Offer Students Summer ACT Test Date Options and ACT Test Online at Home](#)
 - [Free ACT Resources](#) – This two-page document includes test prep resources, fee waiver instructions, and more.
- [Free Practice for the SAT Provided by College Board](#)
- [Tennessee Electronic Transcript Exchange](#)
 - [Student Clearinghouse Guidance PDF](#)
- [Milestones for College & Career Readiness](#)
- Student & Family Communications - Sample Text-based “Nudging” Platforms
 - [Signal Vine](#)
 - [Remind](#)
 - [Possip](#)
 - [SendHub](#)
 - » [THEC Path to College](#) Resources
 - » [THEC/TSAC Virtual Financial Aid Resources](#)

Guides from other organizations

- [American School Counselor Association Planning for Distance Counseling Document](#)
- [National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships \(NACEP\) Coronavirus Resources & Guidance](#)
- [NCAN Virtual Advising Recommendations](#)

Student College & Career Planning Resources

- [Tennessee Student Success Course](#)
 - [College 101 Resources](#)
 - [Getting In and Paying for College](#)
 - [Gearing Up for College](#)
 - [College Skills and Success](#)



Useful Links or Documents- Continued

- CollegeforTN.org
 - [College Planning](#)
 - [Career Planning](#)
- Free Career Aptitude Assessments:
 - [Kuder Navigator \(Grades 6-12\) – Tennessee College and Career Planning System](#)
 - [College Board Career Finder and BigFuture](#)
 - [Princeton Review Career Quiz](#)
 - [ASVAB](#)
- [NEXT Guide: A Guide for Tennessee Seniors](#)
- Scholarships
 - [Scholarship Search and Application Tips](#)
 - [Sites to kick-off scholarship Search](#)

Career Interest Inventories from Sophomore Next Guide

- Holland Code-Interests Inventory
 - <https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip>
- Personality Inventory
 - <https://www.collegefortn.org/open/welcome>
- Road Trip Nation My Road Map
 - <https://roadtripnation.com/roadmap>
- Color Personality Profile
 - <https://profile.keirseey.com/#/b2c/assessment/start>
- YouScience
 - <https://www.youscience.com/thec/>